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GREAT
EXPERIENCE

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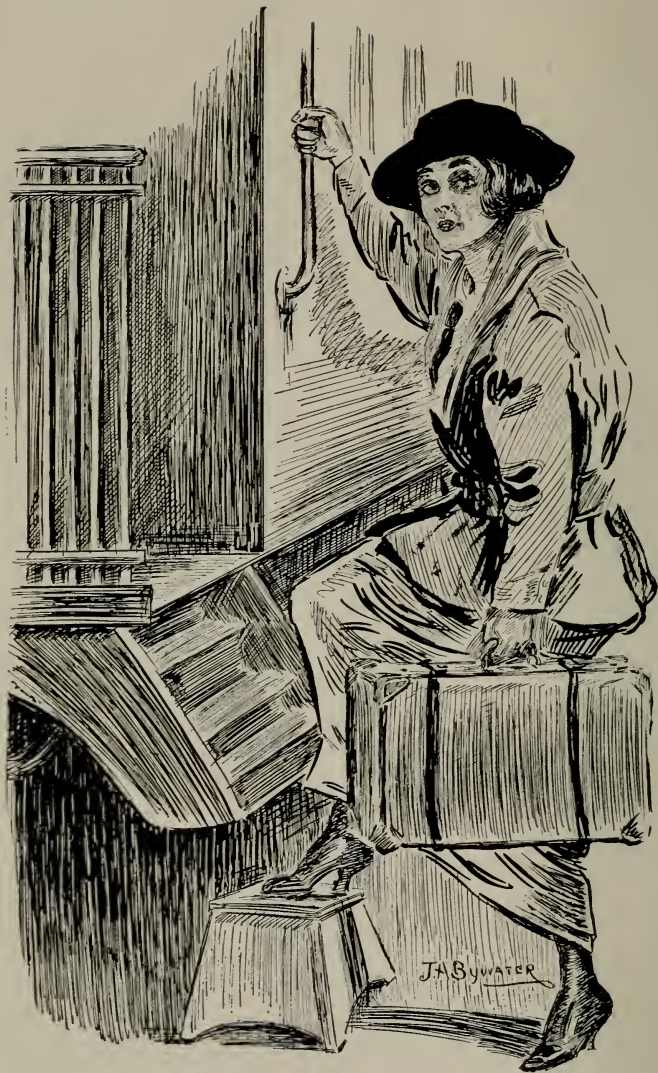
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Before her lay The Great Experience,—the knowledge of the world.

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THE GREAT EXPERIENCE

BY
JULIA FARR

Author of "Venna Hastings"

*"I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided,
and that is the lamp of experience."*

I. P. HENRY

THE DESERET NEWS
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
1920

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*LOVINGLY DEDICATED TO MY
EPHRAIM FRIENDS
MRS. CATHERINE H. THOMPSON AND FAMILY*

PREFACE

Have you been a convert to the "Mormon" faith? Have you left your home-land and started out for the valley in the mountains, leaving friends behind, and looking forward with an awful loneliness to the strange new land where life must begin over again with only the Lord to know and love you? And have you found, on coming to Zion, a *real* friend—one who opens heart and home to welcome the convert, and give that first cheering hope to the tired one, just come from the world's persecutions? If you have had that experience, readers, you can understand with what tenderness I think of Ephraim, where I experienced my first welcome, my first friends in Zion. In trying to think of a suitable setting for my heroine's home life, Ephraim came instantly to my mind, because it was here that I met the real "Mormon" spirit, which strengthened me to bear the disappointments of the morrow. This little city will always be to me one of the chosen spots in God's Zion. I would not have it thought that any of my characters are supposed to be those of Ephraim people. The story is one of fiction, the pioneer stories excepting. These stories are true, and belong to two prominent Utah families.

JULIA FARR.

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THE GREAT EXPERIENCE

CHAPTER I.

"Even a child is known by his doings."—Prov. 20:11.

Dear little Ephraim with its great heart and democratic aspirations, its keen love for its own inhabitants and "The stranger within the gates," its rich and poor living side by side in brotherly sympathy!

This quaint little city seems to cuddle up to the great Rocky Mountains as if for protection from the outer and larger cities of Utah, where the world has crept in and has somewhat changed the spirit of fifty years ago.

"We are simple country-folks," said one of Ephraim's leading citizens, addressing a new-comer as he took her bags, "but you're welcome to our home as long as you care to stay and share it with us."

"O, thank you so much!" exclaimed the Eastern lady, as she patted the light fluffy hair of the ten-year-old girl, clinging to her mother's skirts.

"I love little girls. We'll be good friends, won't we dear?" she asked the child.

"Yes, ma'am," answered Betty Emmit, as she furtively scanned the lady from head to foot. Mentally she was saying, "By heck! a real New-Yorker in Ephraim!"

"The New-Yorker," was amply supplied with bags—

so many in fact, that Mrs. Emmit had to relieve her husband of one, big and heavy.

"The New-Yorker" made an attempt to take it from her.

"Oh, no, Mrs. Catt," exclaimed the good wife; "you must be so tired. We haven't far to go. Any trunk to see to?"

"No, I travel so much that I don't bother with trunks."

So, with this easy acquiescence, Mrs. Webster Catt walked beside her heavy-laden companions.

Betty attempted to give her mother a lift, but was shaken off kindly.

"You're too young and skinny to carry loads yet," explained Mrs. Emmit, who was herself not a great deal taller, nor stouter, than Betty.

Betty flushed furiously. She always felt it an accusation to be called "young and skinny."

"Better to be young and skinny than to be old and fat, ain't it, honey?" Mr. Emmit suggested.

Then he turned to his wife.

"You're tired, aren't you?" he asked, eying her keenly. "Bag heavy, eh?"

But his straight, slim, little wife ignored his question and began talking to Mrs. Catt as quickly as possible.

"So you're here to preach temperance, are you?" she asked in a pleasant tone. "I'm mighty glad someone's taking it up. But to think it should be an outsider! Here's the Church preaching the 'Word of Wisdom' all these years, and telling the people not to drink and smoke, and you've come to tell them to obey the Church!"

Mr. Emmet laughed and there was a mischievous twinkle in his eye.

"You'll be disappointing yourself, if you try to deprive Ephraim of its home brewed ale. It's the one small sin that gives us a big lot of pleasure here."

"Do you think that any sin is small?" asked the reformer sweetly, with her direct gaze compelling honest Ford Emmet to answer squarely.

"Well, no, if you put it that way, but—"

"There's no 'but' about it," interrupted his good wife; "sin is sin."

Betty's brown eyes gazed with open admiration at Mrs. Catt.

Mentally she said, "by heck," again. "She's some game fighter to tackle Ephraim, but I hope she gets beaten; for Ephraim's all right," she concluded with sudden pride.

Soon they reached the Emmet home, an old-fashioned, white framed house, surrounded with hollyhocks and low shrubbery.

"Home at last!" exclaimed the large, gaunt master of the house.

"How perfectly lovely!" exclaimed Mrs. Catt with enthusiasm. "I've always dreamed that it would be so romantic to live in a place like this!"

"Some romance," returned Ford Emmet, laughing heartily, as he deposited the bags on the porch. "We have no time for dreams here; have we, wife? Nine children, and the farm and livestock to it, keep us pretty busy. That's life here!"

At this the door opened and out ran four real children, two boys and two girls, rosy and bright as the dawn.

The two boys were both bright redheads, like their mother; the girls were fair and blue-eyed, with the exquisite coloring of the Norwegian.

"O, Betty," they all cried at once; "we found your pussy dead in the yard. Someone has drowned her."

"Yes, I drowned her, myself," declared Mrs. Emmet. "She's been ailing around the house too long. It ain't good for you, children, to be mauling sick cats," and with this practical dismissal of the fact, she led the way into the house, her visitor, husband, and children, following.

But Betty lingered behind, unnoticed. For a moment she stood, pale and defiant, then, swift as a fawn, she ran around the house and started the search for her dead kitten.

"Pussy dead! pussy dead!" she muttered to herself in anguish, and the tears came thick and fast, as she looked for her dead pet.

At last, in some tall grass, she discovered it, lying cold and wet.

"O, my baby! My darling baby!" she moaned piteously; "to think that I was away and couldn't save you!"

But kitty did not purr in answer, as was her custom, when her mistress talked to her.

Piteously, Betty looked down at the dead thing. It was ugly and she shuddered.

"My darling Tinkey! How ugly death has made you!" Then, a sudden thought brought a quick smile to the downcast countenance. "But, Tinkey, this isn't really you! Where are you, Tinkey, where are you? This is only your body.

Your body will be res'rected some day, won't it, Tinkey? I'll bury it all nice for you, an' you can look on though I can't see you any more. O, Tinkey, I'll never see you any more!" and again the smile vanished, and the little face puckered up.

Slowly the child made her way to a large tree some distance from the house, behind the barn.

She laid the kitten under shelter and then retraced her steps mournfully, back to the kitchen door.

As she opened it she called, "Edna!" in a subdued, awed voice.

Edna put her fair head through the door leading to the sitting-room.

There the family and the "company" were evidently resting and talking.

"What yer want, Betty?" she asked curiously.

"Come right here, Edna Emmit," returned Betty seriously.

Edna closed the door behind her and approached cautiously.

"What's up?"

"Nothin's up, Edna Emmit, but you're the most religious, and I've chose you for the funeral of Tinkey Emmit. Come right along with a towel and our big candy box and meet me under the big tree behind the barn. Mum's the word, Edna. This is a sad time, an' I don't want the whole family lookin' on. You understand?"

Edna was only two years younger than Betty, but she was born with a bump of reverence for her "next sister" and all her doings.

"All right, Betty, I'll be there," she answered respectfully, at once climbing on a kitchen chair, to get the much prized candy box, that had been treasured since it was emptied of its goodies last Christmas.

Betty retrod her way to the big tree quickly, fearing that she might be called before her duty was done.

She knelt down before the dead form and clasped her little hands in prayer.

"Dear God," she said tearfully, "None but you knows jes' how I feel. Take care of Tinkey, an' make me feel better. Amen."

Edna's soft tread behind her made her turn.

"Give me the towel, Edna, and take the box an' fill it with flowers. Tinkey did so love flowers. When you come back, I'll have her all dried for the funeral."

Edna's sympathy brought tears, too. "All right," she said simply, and wandered across the field for the funeral flowers.

When she returned, Betty had Tinkey dried and combed and looking fairly natural.

Gently they placed the kitten in the box and tastefully arranged the flowers about it.

"Now to dig the grave," said Betty. "It's the hardest part to bury her, ain't it?"

"Do you think that Tinkey knows we're givin' her a funeral?" asked Edna, awed.

"Course she does!" answered Betty emphatically, "An' she'll feel mighty bad, if we don't do it nice!"

Betty dug the grave and Edna placed the coffin inside of it. They drew lots as to who should cover the

coffin with dirt—this being the most heart-breaking,—and the lot fell to Betty.

With the tears streaming down her face, she piled the damp earth in, Edna crying more in sympathy for her sister, than in sorrow for Tinkey's death.

The grave filled and covered with flowers, Betty looked around until she found a flat piece of wood. Taking her pencil, she wrote:

"Here lies Tinkey Emmit, too young to die, too sick to live. Mourned for by Edna and Betty Emmit."

She handed this to Edna with a smile of pride between her tears.

"Guess Tinkey'll like that for a gravestone. She'll know jes' why she had to die, an' won't have any bad feelin's."

"You're awfully smart, Betty," declared Edna soberly, as Betty drove the gravestone into the ground.

"Sometimes, Edna, only sometimes," returned Betty humbly. "Now, Edna, kneel th'other side of the grave and we'll have prayer, next."

"Dear God," began Betty, then there was a prolonged silence.

Edna at last opened her eyes.

"Why don't yer pray, Betty?"

Betty answered tremulously, "My heart's so full I can't. You try, Edna."

"I don't know what ter say," returned Edna, frightened, and her two little arms stretched across the grave and wound themselves about her sister's neck, as she burst into sobs.

Betty now entirely unnerved, hugged her sister close.

"Well of all things!" exclaimed Mrs. Emmet, approaching the grave and its mourners unnoticed. "What are you two crying for now?"

The children started and drew apart.

"It's Tinkey's funeral, mamma, that's wot it is!" exclaimed Betty, choking back the sobs.

"Tinkey's funeral!" exclaimed the mother aghast. "You don't mean that you took the cat's death so to heart? You poor, little lambies, come right here to mamma!"

And into mother's arms they flew to be cuddled back to smiles and sunshine.

Mrs. Emmet was not one of the cuddling kind, so this rare treat had its desired effect!

"There now, girlies, run and wash those tears away, and look clean for the company. We'll have supper right soon now."

As the children ran ahead of her to the house, she shook her head doubtfully.

"Who'd a' thought it? Betty is made of too tender stuff for this world. She'll have a hard time of it, poor kiddie!"

Supper was a bountiful repast, served on the "Emmet best china," which as Mrs. Emmet explained to Mrs. Catt, had been handed down from her grandmother, who had been the first woman in Ephraim to own such ware.

Mrs. Catt examined the substantial china with care and admiration.

"It looks just like the good substantial stock, that

you descended from," remarked Mrs. Catt, smiling on her pleased hostess. "How anxious I am to meet some of those old pioneers! Are there any that are still living?"

"Oh yes, indeed. I'll have some of them around one evening, and they will be glad to tell you of their early experiences."

"Nothing that I would like better—how sweet of you to plan such an entertainment for me! What a beautiful home picture!" she added, as she looked at the many happy faces gathered around the big table. "We never see such families in the East. How do you ever manage to get through the work, my dear Mrs. Emmit?"

"It isn't as hard as it looks," returned the good house-wife, beaming with pride on her flock. "You see, one just helps the other, and things just run like clock-work, unless there's a hitch somewhere, but that doesn't happen very often."

"We bring our children up to work from the start," added Mr. Emmit, "Then, when they're big, they're not lazy; they keep a-moving like the rest of us."

"Wonderful! truly wonderful!" exclaimed Mrs. Catt, as she beamed on them all.

Betty ate little, so fascinated was she by the new-comer.

"She knows how to 'preciate!" she thought.

Supper over, Betty sidled up to Mrs. Catt and began to ask questions about the East, all of which were answered kindly by the visitor, while she fondled the child's fluffy hair.

"What an intelligent child Betty is!" she said, turn-

ing to Mr. Emmit, still holding the child's hand in hers.

Betty flushed with pleasure.

"It ain't good to flatter them," returned Mr. Emmit, rather shortly. "The child's about the same as the average young 'un. A lot too touchy at times, and cries too easy."

"That shows a sweet disposition," returned Mrs. Catt, completely winning Betty's heart, as she drank in the soft phrases with thirsty delight.

After the guest had pleaded fatigue and been shown to the "spare-room," and the children were all snug in their several beds, Mr. and Mrs. Emmit sat talking over the plans and the prospects of Mrs. Catt's campaign in Ephraim.

"Now, of course, wife, I'll get the town-hall for her to lecture in, and 'cause you're so daffy over the woman, I'll do my best to help her to get through with her temperance talks, but—" here he stopped and puffed his pipe, with an intense scowl on his honest, rough countenance.

"But what?" asked his wife, quickly.

"Well, Eliza, if I must out with it, I don't like the woman!"

"Ford Emmit, if that isn't the limit!" exclaimed his wife. "You do take the most unreasonable likes and dislikes. I think that she is the most wonderful, fascinating character."

"There you have it, Eliza! fascinating—that's the word,—fascinating, but it ain't all gold that glitters. She's slick."

"It isn't real Christian of you, Ford, to talk that way when you know she's come here to help in the Lord's work."

"Mebbe,—we'll see," he answered, quietly.

"Have you anything against her?" asked his wife a trifle anxiously.

"Only feelin's, wife."

"Then remember our good song, Ford,—'School thy feelings.'"

Ford Emmitt laughed good-naturedly.

"All right, wife, so long as you don't ask me to give up my pipe, I'll help her through. You don't know the world much. There's not many women like you that come from the East. They're well trained—you never can tell what they're thinking on."

"You mean that there are no good women in the East?"

"Heck, no! But there's no way of sifting them and knowing them. The tares grow with the wheat, and get tangled mightily sometimes. Here, you wives, are mostly same grain, and fairly good at that," he said, taking his wife's hand in his big, brawny one, for an affectionate squeeze.

"We all think that our own is the best, Ford!" his wife answered, with a pleased smile. "But it is not for us to set judgment on the next one."

* * * * *

That night, when all had retired, Betty made her way to her mother's bed-room.

Mrs. Emmitt was almost asleep, when she saw the

little night-gowned figure with its loose hair and bare little feet, approach.

"Why Betty, what brought you here? You should be asleep in bed."

"But mamma, dear, I can't sleep, until you promise me one thing!"

"And what's your brain taking on now, child?"

She sat on the edge of the bed, and looked at her mother with wide, serious eyes.

"When I get old enough, will you let me go on a mission, mamma?"

"Well, of all things to keep you awake! If the Church calls you, of course you'll go, provided we don't go bankrupt before then."

"You really mean it, mamma?" cried Betty delightedly.

"Yes. Run away now and get to sleep as soon as you can."

Betty stooped, kissed her mother impulsively, and was gone.

When she reached her own bed-room, she knelt down and folded her hands in prayer.

"Dear Lord," she said, "please tell the Church to call me on a mission, and keep mamma's money safe. Amen."

Then she jumped into bed, and was soon asleep.

* * * * *

CHAPTER II.

No great truth was ever born into the world, without the throes of suffering of those who bore it.

Mrs. Emmet's invitations to four of the pioneers of Ephraim were gladly accepted, and all expressed themselves as delighted to meet the Eastern lady, who was going to make every careless "Latter-day Saint" reflect on the "Word of Wisdom."

The large, homey sitting-room was bright with the rays of the setting sun, sinking over the mountains in its golden glory, and casting its stray beams in at the bay-window, with a cheeriness that made the simple room look beautiful. It was eight o'clock.

One by one the guests arrived, each bringing a handful of roses.

"June roses! How perfectly exquisite!" exclaimed Mrs. Catt, graciously accepting the flowers, while Betty ran for vases. Soon they were all prettily arranged on the center table, filling the room with a rich fragrance.

"Surely, life in Ephraim is worth while," declared Mrs. Catt, again smiling on the happy, old faces surrounding her. "All flowers and sunshine!"

When Betty had finished fixing the flowers, she sat on a cushion by her wonderful guest and affectionately leaned her head on Mrs. Catt's knee.

Her little face was flushed with excitement, and her eyes looked larger than ever.

"Ephraim's going ter show off now, and she's just the kind ter 'preciate!" she thought joyfully. How the child did love her own home town!

"Yes, it's all roses and sunshine now ma'am, but times there was when it wasn't jes' like this," remarked one old lady, shaking her head thoughtfully.

"That's true, Sister Anne," spoke up old Brother Jacobson. "We've known the time, when only thorns grew!"

"Now, that is just what I want you to tell me about. I'm just longing to hear about those by-gone days—why you came here, and what you found.—Do, someone, begin, please!" urged Mrs. Catt, sweetly.

One thin, erect, old lady, with a quick, bright eye, turned to Mrs. Catt with a smile.

"Sister Anne and Brother Jacobson may have suffered from the thorns, but I can't say that I did. What did I come for? For the faith, of course, as we all did. I walked eight hundred miles, pushing a cart, and I tell you, ma'am, every mile was too short for the faith! And when I got here? Every burden was too light to bear for the sake of the glorious truth, and the Lord has blessed me with children, and grand-children, and health, but I'd been glad to go on suffering for the glory of the gospel!"

There was a silence after this burst of enthusiasm, **and** Mrs. Catt eyed the woman as if studying some strange species.

"And your faith carried you through everything, joyously?" she asked, credulously.

"Yes, the Lord upheld me always."

"Did you bring up a large family?" asked the Easterner curiously.

"Yes, thirteen children. My husband has gone ahead of me awhile, but I'm glad to stay as long as God wills. With such a big, happy family, one couldn't be lonesome, you know."

"No, I suppose not," returned Mrs. Catt, sweetly. "You women have led wonderful lives. Now, who's going to begin to tell me how they happened to come to Zion?"

There was a pause, as one looked at the other, smiling.

"You don't mind talking about it, do you?" she asked pleasantly.

Mrs. Emmit answered for them.

"Gracious, no! They just love to talk about it to those who are really interested in the gospel; don't you?"

All smiled assent.

"Suppose you begin, Brother Madson," suggested Mrs. Emmit.

"Very well," replied a stout, florid-faced, old gentleman, genially. "It's rather a long story, but very interesting."

The elder people settled more comfortably in their seats, and the children leaned forward eagerly.

"My mind wanders back to my happy boyhood days in Norway," he began. "We lived out of town on a comfortable estate, as my father was well-to-do, and we had everything we could desire. There were four of us chil-

dren,—three girls, and myself. My mother was a dear tender-hearted woman, living solely for her husband and children, and always shielding us from the sterner character of my father, who was a strict Lutheran.

“When I became eighteen, much to my mother’s distress, my father had me sent to the town alone, to take the position of jailer in the county prison,

“‘It’ll make a man of him—he’s been cuddled too much—’ he explained to my mother. ‘If he succeeds in doing his duty, I’ll have him home in a year or two and give him something worth while.’

“So off to town I went and became a jailer.

“After being there for a time, I had turned over to my care two young men. They were thrown into prison and condemned to die. Their appearance attracted me.

“‘For what are they condemned?’ I asked the warden.

“‘They are “Mormons,” answered the warden.

“‘And what are “Mormons?” I asked.

“‘Preachers of some newfangled religion from America, that doesn’t take here,’ he explained.

“Preachers condemned to die! I thought this both strange and interesting.

“So, from curiosity, I looked in upon the jailbirds, to see how they were acting. There they were on their knees, praying hard, not for deliverance, but that the Lord would forgive those who had condemned them. On seeing me, they calmly arose from their knees and asked when they were condemned to die.

“‘Tomorrow,’ I reluctantly replied.

“ ‘Then we must lose no time in giving you our great message,’ the elder one said, his eyes shining with a great faith, ‘You will listen?’

“ ‘Yes,’ I answered simply.

“Then these two young missionaries lay before me the restored Gospel as I have never heard it preached since. Realizing they were near death, their souls burned with the desire to save one more soul.

“It was wonderful! Their words thrilled my whole being, and their truths appealed to me.—At once I was converted. I couldn’t help myself. God seemed very near in that prison cell, and I felt His Spirit urging me to accept the Gospel.

“I told them this and we all knelt down and prayed.

“Then I left them and hurried to the warden.

“ ‘What’s the matter now?’ he asked tersely.

“ ‘Matter enough!’ I returned earnestly, ‘Do you know we have two of God’s own men condemned to die to morrow?’

“ ‘Been talking to them, eh? They seemed a good sort to me.—But that’s none of *our* business.’

“ ‘Do you call yourself a Christian, Axel, and say that it’s none of our business whether or not these two good young men are murdered, under our very eyes?’

“ ‘What are you going to do about it? The priest’s word is law here. And how do you know anyway, that they’re not a menace to the church? Mon, you’re too easily influenced.’

“ ‘Come talk to them yourself. They’re anxious to see you,’ I returned.

"And so after some persuasion, I led the warden to the cell. We approached cautiously and unobserved.

"They were both kneeling in silent prayer, their faces upturned with a rapt expression of those oblivious to all earthly things and interests.

"The warden's expression, at first curious, turned to one of sympathy. 'Damn!' he muttered.

"The young men started, opened their eyes and on seeing us, arose from their knees.

"'Sorry to disturb you gentlemen. I'm damn sorry for you for I see you're the good sort. What made you such fools as to oppose the priest? Law's tight here.'

"The young missionaries smiled calmly.

"'Do not pity us, friend; we are honored to die for Christ. I wish that you could feel that.'

"For two hours the young preachers talked and the warden, at first skeptical, finally grew more interested until what seemed a miracle happened.

"This experienced man of the world, this crusty warden took both young men by the hand and exclaimed, 'Boys, you've got the truth; I never thought to find it on the earth, but it's here with you. I'll go to the priest the first thing tonight and plead your case. Let's pray the Lord to melt his heart and influence the authorities to free you.'

"And so we all knelt down within the death-cell and the younger missionary prayed that they might escape death if it was the Lord's will that they should save more souls.

"After we left the cell, I begged the warden to let me go to the priest.

" 'Nonsense Mon, you couldn't do a thing with him. You'd blubber out that you were converted and land in jail yourself. I'll handle him better and scare him a bit as to consequences. The lads have some good friends here.'

"And so the warden left and I went back to my charges.

"The anxiety of the next two hours, I shall never forget. The young missionaries were calm and undisturbed, but while I listened to the truths they were telling me, my heart was anxiously waiting the return of the warden.

"At last he came.

" 'Good news?' I cried anxiously.

" 'Yes,' answered the warden, smiling on us all. 'I got him, but we'll have to rid the country of you tomorrow—cross the border you must, or surely die.'

" 'Thank God!' I exclaimed. 'And we—we must be baptized before they go!'

" 'You're running quick, Mon,' said the warden, 'What's the hurry?'

" 'We might never have the chance again, as the missionaries are leaving. You will baptize me?' I asked them.

" 'Yes, indeed,—We will do all we can for you before we leave,' they answered happily.

"That evening we were baptized. I shall never forget the glorious moon shining on the waters,—the clear

frosty air that invigorated our bodies, and yet did not chill.

"When we returned to the jail, we spent an hour in prayer and never did I feel the Lord's Spirit, as I did within those prison walls that night.

"The next day before dawn, I took our prisoners out of town and saw them safely across the border.

" 'I wish that you could go back to America with us,' they said anxiously.

" 'Oh, don't worry about me,' I replied joyously, 'I'll have to keep the faith a secret here, but I'm going home at Christmas-time, and when I tell them all, they'll rejoice and accept the Gospel, too. Then, I will not fear, for father's an influential man.'

" 'God grant that it may be so,' returned the missionaries, 'and the warden?'

" 'He, too, has a large family to convert.'

"So we bade one another 'good-bye,' and I returned to the jail.

"It wanted only three months to Christmas, and the time passed quickly and happily.

"When the holidays came, I bade good-bye to the warden.

"Axel, don't lose the faith, it'll be hard to stand alone.'

" 'You're not coming back?' asked the warden in surprise.

" 'I hardly expect to,' I replied. 'You know, Axel, father can afford it, and I'm going to ask him to let me

go to Ameriac, and when I've learned more of the Gospel, I'll come back on a mission.'

" 'Man proposes, and God disposes, Mon,' replied the warden sadly.

" 'Ah! but you don't know how religious my father is!' I explained with confidence.

" 'And as narrow as the rest of them, no doubt,' returned the warden shortly. 'Well, old boy,' he added, grasping my hand warmly, 'I wish you luck and if prayers help, you can count on mine!'

"And so we parted.

"Christmas-time in Norway is a time of great feasting, hospitality, and good-will toward all.

"How light was my heart as I entered the old home and received the warm welcome of my parents and sisters!

" 'We've certainly missed you, Mon,' they all agreed. 'But now we'll have such a splendid Yule-tide to make up for it.'

" 'Splendid Yule-tide,—yes!' I thought exultingly, 'They little know what a wonderful gift I am bringing home to them all.'

"The first evening that we were gathered together, I told them of the great change that had come into my life. I began the story at the beginning, and soon got them interested. But when my father asked me, 'Were the missoinaries "Lutheran" and how did it happen that they were arrested?' I answered, 'No, they were "Mormons" from America, preaching the restored Gospel.'

"Then the storm came. My poor father exclaimed horrified,

" 'You don't mean that you saved two Mormons to do more of Satan's work?'

" 'They do the Lord's work, father,' I returned quietly.

" 'You have not listened to their wicked preaching, have you?' asked my father angrily, rising from his chair, while my mother and sisters looked on in dismay.

" 'Yes, father, I have become a 'Mormon. God knows, I am a better man.'

"At this he became enraged to madness. 'My son a "Mormon!" he exclaimed fiercely. 'Never! I command you to drop this evil and come to your senses. 'Mormons!' they are the scum of the earth, coming here to contaminate decent people in this country.'

"For a moment there was silence and my mother came to me and put her arms around my neck, beseechingly looking into my eyes with a mother's fear.

" 'O Mon,' she said trembling, 'obey your father, boy! give up these evil companions, *do*, Mon!'

" 'But, mother dear, if you would only let me explain I'll show you all that they are not evil.'

"Angrily, my father separated us. 'Do you dare, Mon, to make your father out a liar?'

"I stood stupefied, hardly knowing how to take his unlooked for passion.

" 'No, father,' I at last ventured, 'but you don't understand.'

" 'Then I'm a fool! to be taught by a fanatical young-

ster of eighteen!' he returned hotly. 'Again, will you drop this thing, or not?'

"I felt a great strength surge up in me, and I stood erect.

"'Father, it grieves me to wound you, but Christ suffered, and if needs be I must also. I have taken this step for life. I cannot retrace.'

"'Then leave this house; you're no son of mine!' came the words, distinctly clear, as my father threw open the door wide, and pointed the way out.

"The wind rushed in bringing the large hail-stones from the storm without.

"'In the storm, father, this dark night?' I asked incredulously.

"'I've said it!' was his short answer.

"My mother made to intercede for me, but he pushed her back, and stood between us.

"'Better no son at all, than one to disgrace us!' he declared, sternly. I looked out into the blackness of night, then at the cheerful fire, lighting up the room in genial comfort.

"Satan whispered. 'Don't be a fool. Your father's religion is good enough for you. You're a stranger to the new religion. You'll do more good and sacrifice less by staying with the old.'

"But the angel of the Lord led me out,—out into the darkness, penniless, alone, with the cries of my mother ringing in my ears.

"A few steps and I turned. Surely I must kiss my good mother farewell. The door was still open and my

father was an angry sentinel watching my going.

“‘Well?’ he asked, sternly.

“‘May I bid farewell to my mother?’

“‘No! your mother is too good for such as you. Begone!’

“And with the last harsh word, he lifted an axe from the wall and hurled it after me.

“Then the door shut, and I found myself writhing with pain upon the wet ground.

“The axe had penetrated into my leg. I tried, but could not remove the cruel torment.

“I prayed hard and received strength to stand and then, soon, I was able to drag myself the three weary miles to the prison.

“By this time, my high boot was filled with blood, and the warden received me fainting in his arms.

“When I came to, the warden was binding up my wound, and cursing under his breath.

“‘Don’t curse, Axel,’ I said feebly.

“‘That’s not your sin. It’s mine. How do you feel now?’ he asked with rough kindness.

“‘Rather weak,’ I replied.

“‘Reckon so,’ he said shortly. ‘Had a row with your very religious father?’

“‘Yes,’ I answered simply, ignoring his sarcasm.

“‘I expected it,’ he returned. ‘Now you rest here ’till you’re strong and I’ll see you across the border. It won’t be long before everyone knows that you are a ‘Mormon.’ News travels quickly and they’ll hound you

as they did the others. I'll hide you here 'til you're stronger.'

" 'And you?' I asked anxiously.

" 'Will meet you in America, some day! Sleep now. The sooner you're out of here, the better for you!'

"So in a few days I was across the border, with my purse filled by the faithful warden.

"I will not relate to you my numerous experiences and difficulties on my way to Utah. The good sister has just told you how eight hundred miles seemed too short to walk for the faith, and I walked one thousand miles and found them too short for the faith too.

"I arrived in Zion fatigued, but happy. There was work for me here and oh! the glorious freedom of the Gospel and the love of the brethren!

"I soon took a wife,—a good sweet woman, who is waiting for me yonder. Ten years of hard work and real happiness followed. Four children were born to us and our home was one of the best in Utah.

"Then the Church called me on a mission to Norway.

"My heart beat fast at the very thought.

"To Norway! my old home!

"True! my folks had never answered my letters, but if I went there personally, it would soften their hearts and surely the Lord would open up the way for me to give them the Gospel!

"It was nearing Christmas. I would approach my old home at Yule-tide again, in the time of homecoming and good cheer!

"Tenderly I bid my family good-bye, and with a thankful heart started on my journey.

"On reaching Norway, I told the mission headquarters my story, and they said that I might go to my home for Yule-tide.

"It was the day before Christmas when I reached the old prison, where I asked for the Warden.

" 'Oh, he's left the country—is in England, I believe. He joined those dastard "Mormons" and kept it dark. But we found him out. However, he escaped, and last I heard of him, he was in England, making the devil of a time there, preaching his doctrines.' "

" 'So the prejudice is just the same,' I thought sadly, as I footed it to my home.

"My heart grew heavy as I thought of the last time I had struggled along that road in the dark stormy night; then I pushed the thought from me and dwelt on the future. Now that I had returned, prosperous and happy, I could persuade them.

"I was changed from youth to manhood,—they would see what the Gospel had done for me.

"At last the home was reached. I entered the gate. As I walked through the garden, which was lightly frosted with snow, I looked from right to left, upon the unchanged scenes. Years seemed like days, and it seemed as though I were a boy again, returning from school for the happy Yule-tide greetings. My heart with a bound forgave the last ten years, and I longed to grasp my father's hand and tell him so. And my dear mother?

She must be aged now, but still the same sweet, tender heart!

"With trembling hands I knocked on the door, that had been closed to me, all these years.

"My eldest sister opened it. Two little girls clung to her skirts. She looked many years older, and lines of care furrowed her face.

"She didn't know me.

" 'Well, sir?' she asked quietly.

" 'Is Mr. or Mrs. Madson at home?' I asked controlling myself with effort.

" 'Both dead, sir,' she answered shortly.

" 'Dead!' I exclaimed aghast.

" 'Yes, sir?' she answered sadly. 'The plague, two years ago, took my father and my two sisters. Sad times here then.'

" 'And the mother?' I asked trembling.

" 'O, she, poor thing, died nine years ago. She doted on her only son, who joined the wicked "Mormons," and it broke her heart. She just wilted like a flower and died.'

"I grasped the railing of the porch for support.

" 'You're pale, sir!' she exclaimed in sudden pity. 'Did you know them? Who are you?'

" 'Don't you know me?' I cried in agony of spirit. 'I'm your brother—Mon!'

"For a moment she looked at me in dismayed astonishment, then her face contracted in anger. She lifted her arm, and pointed to the gate.

" 'How dare you enter here! You killed your moth-

er, broke your father's heart! Have you come back to torment me?"

"'I have come to help you,' I answered brokenly. 'To help all—but only you are left. Oh, listen to what I have to tell you—in our mother's name, listen!' I pleaded.

"'Never!' she answered hoarsely. 'I hate the very sight of you. Go, I say, or I'll have you sent!'

"I turned and fairly staggered down the old familiar path to the gate.

"There I turned, but she stood angry and unrelenting.

"So this was my home-coming! I hardly know how I made my way back to mission headquarters. When I reached there, for a time, I was completely overcome by this heart-rending experience.

"But the prayers of the Saints, lifted me out of myself, and I fulfilled my mission, with some happy results.

"When I reached home in Utah, I told my wife about my sad home in Norway.

"'Mon,' she said with her eyes glowing with faith, 'We will pray every night that the Lord will save your sister for the Gospel.'

"So every night at family prayers, my sister and her family were remembered.

"Years passed. My eldest boy, Mon, was twenty years old. The Church called him on a mission to Norway.

"'Father,' he said to me, earnestly, 'I'll pray God to let me bring your sister back to America.'

“ ‘May the Lord so will it!’ I answered fervently, with a sudden longing for my own kinsfolk.

“ ‘When my son arrived in Norway, he went immediately to the old home. It was sold and my sister departed, none knew where.

“ ‘This news was a great disappointment, but my son wrote hopefully.

“ ‘God can overcome anything, father. Have faith and pray. I’ll find her yet.’

“ ‘One month later came another letter from Norway.

“ ‘Dear father :—I have found your sister,—in fact, I am now boarding at her boarding-house. Her husband died, leaving her almost penniless, after squandering away the estate.

“ ‘She doesn’t know that I am her nephew.

“ ‘When she and two daughters—young ladies now—were in great trouble, some “Mormons” crossed her path, and with the usual kindness, helped her through sickness and trial. She is almost converted to the faith. When she knew that I was a “Mormon,” she rejoiced, and every chance we have, we are together, talking of the Gospel. Surely God led me right to her house, in answer to our prayers.

“ ‘Last night she told me that she had a great weight on her heart—she did not believe that she was worthy to be baptized.

“ ‘I asked her to confide in me.

“ ‘She then told me with tears in her eyes, how she had treated her brother.

“ ‘ “Will you write to your folks,” she asked humbly,

"and ask them to try to find him? I must ask his forgiveness, before I think of being baptized."

"So dear father, write to her as soon as you can to console her broken heart and give her hope."

"I'll never forget that letter and the joy we all felt."

"I was blest with wealth and a happy home, and my good wife said: 'Mon, your sister must come to Zion! She and her daughters shall be happy near her brother.'"

"So I wrote, and enclosed money for my sister and her children to come to Zion."

"My son baptized them, and then they came to Zion. O, what a joyful re-union was ours! My dear sister you all knew, humble and sweet to her death. The two daughters have happy homes, not far from here, and are bringing up their children in the faith! How great and good the Lord is!"

As brother Madson stopped speaking, everyone sat thoughtfully silent.

"And the Warden?" asked Betty in subdued excitement.

"Is right here," said Brother Jacobson, smiling. "I'm the Warden, and thank God for being able to spend my last days near the jailor!"

Mrs. Catt broke the silence.

"That story is certainly interesting enough to print," she said pleasantly.

"Who next will give us pleasure?" she asked turning to Sister Anne. "You?"

Sister Anne smilingly assented.

"I was only eight years old when I left England, but

I shall never forget it. My dear mother and father accepted the Gospel almost directly that it was preached to them.

"This horrified and enraged my mother's parents, who believed that my father was the one to blame and that he had unusual Satanic influence over my mother. So they decided to kill him. In the dead of night they came to our home and I was awakened by the shrieks of my mother, who was trying with her delicate strength to hold the door from the invaders without. With a crush, they broke in at the windows, but mother had kept them out long enough for father to hide in one of the large copper kettles. Enraged they looked for him in vain, leaving the house with threatenings for the future.

"My parents realized that they must emigrate to Utah—there was no peace at home. So with their five children, and I the eldest, they set sail for America.

"We were many weeks on the water. When we reached the Mississippi, mother was exhausted, for the food had been very bad and the trip rough. As we neared St. Louis, cholera broke out on board our boat, and mother immediately fell a victim. The quarantine officers ordered us all on deck, and the word went around that cholera victims would be taken off separately.

"I shall never forget my father's grief. Mother was almost gone, and to be separated would be awful.

"With her usual grit, mother braced up, and with father's help, managed to crawl to the deck. There she sat by father, and when the quarantine officer came around she pretended to be eating her soup with relish.

This deceived him and he passed her by. The next day my mother died, leaving five children, one a little baby. Never will I forget our burying mother in St. Louis. Father was grief stricken, but his wonderful faith held him up and he told me to be 'little mother.' We purchased a wagon and team and started on our long journey across the plains. After many days of hardships, we reached Utah, and there my father worked long hard days and raised his little flock, with only me to help him. So you see my parents sacrificed all for the faith, so is it not natural I prize it above other things?"

"And the Indians, did they ever get the baby?" asked Betty excitedly.

"No, dear, but nearly, several times. It was their pet revenge to steal babies, and we had to guard them closely.

Just then a knock at the door made them turn.

To Mrs. Emmet's cheery "come in," a woman of eighty entered.

"Why sister Heller, you're just in time for some ice-cream," said Mrs. Emmet delightedly. "Mrs. Catt, I want to introduce to you another member of our Ephraim family."

Mrs. Catt smiled at the dark, swarthy old woman who had entered. Surely she was an Indian.

Sister Heller smiled in return, but her small sharp eyes seemed to pierce the visitor with an unnecessary stare.

"We're very fond of her," spoke up Mrs. Emmet, "she was treated roughly by her own people as they passed.

She was so old that she couldn't keep up with the tribe, so they didn't want her. We took her and she has been one of us ever since."

The old Indian smilingly nodded and then uncovered a basket of home-made cookies.

"I brought them over for your party," she said simply.

"And so the little party ate ice-cream and cake and chattered until late.

Betty took the Indian woman aside before leaving.

"Isn't the 'New-Yorker' jest wonderful?" she asked delighted.

The old woman looked down at the child's eager face without a smile.

"Betty, I don't like her. Have a care. The Indian knows friend or foe."

Betty's face flushed with righteous indignation.

"For shame, you're not an Indian now—you're a Christian, but you don't talk like one!"

She patted Betty's head lovingly. "You see, Dearie, you see!"

CHAPTER III.

A child's love is as proportionately great as a woman's.

Two years later and Spring Conference had come to Salt Lake City.

When all the "Mormons" in Utah tried to get to their semi-annual conference, in their beloved city, it meant a sight for tourists indeed!

So thought young Dr. George Cadman, who was returning to New York, from a trip to California, and had stopped off at Salt Lake to see the sights and especially to get a glimpse of those peculiar people called "Mormons," about whom so much was said and written.

Dr. Cadman was a handsome man of twenty-four, medium in height, but strongly built. His fine regular features and deep-set gray eyes, made him the object of attraction to more than one as he stood on the corner of Main street, outside of the Hotel Utah, looking at the crowds, as they made their way to the great tabernacle.

"Strange!" he thought, "these people don't look wicked!" Then he walked over to the monument of Brigham Young, to read the inscription.

"Stranger here, brother?" asked a pleasant voice.

He turned to meet the pleasant gaze of an old, long-bearded man, attired in a plain black suit. On his arm hung his wife, presumably about his own age, wearing a black cloth dress.

"Yes, quite a stranger," returned Dr. Cadman courteously. "This statue, I believe is of the man who led the 'Mormons' through the 'Rockies?' "

The old man's eyes fired with enthusiasm.

"Yes, brother, yes! Brigham Young, the Prophet of the Lord! A grander man I never knew. He led us here—to our destruction, the world thought,—but it was to our peace and prosperity!"

George scanned the couple with interest. They didn't look very prosperous. Aloud he said, "So you're a 'Mormon,' are you? And one of the old pioneers?"

"Yes, brother, I knew Brigham Young in Nauvoo, when we were driven out across the plains, I knew that he was God's own man, and I followed him, with sure faith in my heart. If you like, sir, the meeting's just on, and you might walk down with us?"

"I will, thank you," returned Dr. Cadman pleasantly, and the three walked down to the Temple, the old man greatly pleased with the visitor, and "the visitor" greatly amused with the thought of walking down the street with "Mormons."

"There's nothing very bad about them," he decided to himself. "Just easily lead, and simple-minded."

When they reached the Temple gate, the old man turned to him kindly. "Sorry, but you'll have to throw that cigar away, brother. They don't allow smoking on the Temple grounds."

Cadman flushed, and looked at his freshly lit cigar doubtfully.

"Well, here goes!" he decided. "It's worth it to see a real 'Mormon' congregation."

As they entered the grounds, a group of about fifteen men, women, and children surrounded them.

"Where have you been?" exclaimed a chorus of voices, accosting the old couple, joyously. "We've been looking for you the city over. Hurry or we'll not get a front seat."

George found himself proudly introduced to the old couple's children and grand-children and then hurried off by the entire family to the tabernacle.

That night he wrote to a New York cousin, the following letter:

"My dear old pal:—Such a pleasant trip, all the way through! I've separated from the party, however, for the way they traveled, didn't suit me. They reminded me of a lot of bees, sipping the honey momentarily from each flower that they passed. On a trip like this, I like to study my own dear America. I decided to stop off a few days at the Indian reservation,—that settled it—since then I have been traveling alone.

"You know Mrs. Hester of the party? Exclaimed she, 'Those frightful Indians, Dr. Cadman! How can you care to look at those awful people a second time!'

"And now—those frightful 'Mormons' I find very interesting! I meant to spend one day here at Salt Lake City, but this first day has been so interesting, I mean to spend more.

"I must tell you about my experience today.

"I was gazing at Brigham Young's monument, when I was accosted by a very plainly dressed old man, and his wife. After a little conversation, I went to their tabernacle with them, and on the way was introduced to their family,—big enough for five separate Eastern homes!

"But, Will, the tabernacle service was a great surprise to me. The singing, speaking, music were all uplifting. There's something wrong about those Anti-'Mormon' lecturers out home. These people are dead in earnest, and I'll wager they're sincere.

"If I were religiously inclined, I'd say, 'The spirit is more in this Church, than in the churches of the world,' but—as I'm not religious, as you know, I simply feel a great respect for these people and a reverence, a little foreign to my nature,—when in their tabernacle.

"I met a farmer from a little place called Ephraim. I told him how I would enjoy meeting some 'Mormon' ranchers and shepherders, etc., and he immediately invited me to his home, and he said he'd show me around. What think you of that for western hospitality? Can you beat it? Inviting a stranger, whom he has not even heard of! Well, I'm off for Ephraim tonight with my new-found friend to study the 'Mormons!'

"By the way, I found out from my Ephraim friend that the old man I made friends with could easily buy me out. So much for appearances!

"Give my love to Alma, and tell little Harold that I'll bring him something that the Indians made.

"Good-bye old chap. I'll write from Ephraim, so if you don't hear from me, you'll know that they have stolen

me for a 'Mormon' harem on account of my good looks!

"Yours faithfully,

L

"George Cadman."

* * * * *

"Ephraim, June 15, 1919.

"Dear Will:—Guess you're wondering? Well old chap, I've had some strange experiences.

"My Ephraim friend and his family (wife and eight children) have treated me royally. What I haven't seen, wouldn't be worth seeing. There's a little girl of twelve, that is the most captivating piece of femininity you can imagine. She's a bunch of happiness, merry to impertinence at times, but with all so religious. She is saving her pennies to go on a mission to convert such as you and I (so she frankly declares) to 'Mormonism.'

"I took such a fancy to the youngster, and she to me, that everywhere I went, she has been by my side.

"Two days ago, she and I went for a ride in her father's machine and some youngster ran us down. Some accident! and my little companion got all the bruises and cuts, while I escaped. She wants no doctor but myself, and as she must stay in bed a few days, I'm prolonging my visit until she is well. I'm sitting by her bed-side now.

"She just interrupted me by saying, 'I know by the way you look that you are writing about me. Be sure to tell my name—I might meet him on my mission.'

" 'How do you spell your last name, Betty?' I asked, ready to obey.

"‘E-m-m-i-t,’ she said brightly,—then under the covers went her head, and I heard a giggle.

"‘What’s up now?’ I asked.

"Two laughing brown eyes peeked out at me.

"‘Put a D before it and it spells what?’ she asked.

"‘Demmit,’ I replied quickly,—and then I wish you could have heard her laugh.

"The country here is beautiful, and the people so full of faith, it seems a different world to gay old New York. I think that if I stayed here long, I would get the fever and attend meetings like the rest of them.

"But all joking aside, it’s refreshing to see real homes, real mothers, and merry children. I’ll be sorry when I leave this ‘Mountain country,’ which will be in a few days,—so I’ll see you all soon. Love to Alma and Harold.

"Yours as ever,

"George."

* * * * *

"Well, little Betty, I guess you’re almost well now, and I must end this long, pleasant vacation," said Dr. Cadman as they walked along one of Ephraim’s country roads.

Betty looked up with troubled eyes.

"You don’t mean you’re going to leave us—yet?"

"Why girlie, I only intended to stay until you were well! What will all the sick people do in New York?" he asked playfully.

But Betty hung her head and walked on in silence.

Dr. Cadman loved children and he had learned to love this little "Mormon" girl. He saw her disappointment, and was sorry.

"Now Betty, dear," he said, taking her hand tenderly, "We're awfully good friends, aren't we? You know, Uncle Sam has a post-office, and you'll write letters to me and I'll answer everyone,—until we meet again."

"Oh, will you?" eagerly asked Betty, looking up with one of her sudden sunny smiles, "It won't be quite so bad then."

"And then in a few years," continued Dr. Cadman happily, "there will be a fine young Ephraim lady coming on a mission to New York, and Dr. Cadman will have to introduce her to some well-known people to convert!"

Betty clapped her hands—a way she had of expressing great joy.

"How wonderful!" she exclaimed, "and you'll have your minister all ready for me to preach 'Mormonism' in his church?"

"Not so fast, girlie! Not so fast! Ministers are rather queer when 'Mormonism' is mentioned."

A cloud chased Betty's smile away and her brow thoughtfully puckered.

"I wonder why?" she said slowly, "and you, Brother Cadman, why are you not a 'Mormon?'"

Dr. Cadman hesitated, then said kindly, "Probably for the same reason that you *are* one."

"I don't understand," said Betty.

"You were born a '*Mormon*,' explained Dr. Cadman, "I was born a '*Presbyterian*.'"

"I am not a '*Mormon*' because I was born one!" said Betty decidedly. "If I did not know that my religion was the true one, I would search until I found the truth."

Dr. Cadman smiled down on her.

"Wise little head! Suppose I should tell you that my church was the true church?"

Betty looked up seriously.

"You're too good to say what you don't mean," she answered quietly.

Dr. Cadman flushed as he replied, "Betty Emmet, you have an uncomfortable way of reading one's thoughts. Child that you are, you're right. I belong to a church that I don't care a great deal about. I'm interested in God and nature, but I'm not interested in church."

Betty's little thoughtful frown reappeared.

"How can you be interested in God and not in his work?"

The young man smiled. "Girlie, you're not on a mission yet, but when you come, I'll promise to discuss everything. I wouldn't argue with you now,—my last desire would be to influence as great a faith as yours. Keep it—just as long as you can. I wish that I possessed half as good."

Betty's eyes shone.

"O, I hope that you will. It's wonderful to feel sure and safe about everything that you believe. If you think I'm so young, it's no use talking. But I'll remember your promise when I come to New York."

"How do you know that the Church will send you to New York?"

"Because I've asked God to make it so," she answered simply.

Dr. Cadman sighed.

"How beautiful is youth, how bright it gleams! There! I won't say the rest!"

"O, but I know it," laughed Betty. "With all its illusions, aspirations, dreams! You know that reminds me of an old woman, with false hair, false teeth, and wrinkles, whining over her lost beauty! Why are people so sickly in poetry! Do you know what I would like that second line to be?"

"Out with it," laughed Cadman.

Betty's eyes danced with merriment.

"How beautiful is youth, how bright it gleams,
Except to sour old fogies, who failed to catch sun-
beams!"

"So, Miss Betty, I'm a sour old fogie?" asked Dr. Cadman laughing.

Betty blushed furiously.

"Oh, no, I didn't mean *you*," she said quickly.

"It's well that you didn't, young lady," returned Cadman, greatly amused with this child of the hills.

"Now to change the subject, do you know anyone in New York?"

"Only one perfect lovely lady," returned Betty. "She came to Ephraim two years ago, and preached so wonderfully—everyone gave up their beer, and some their

pipes. I did love her so! I've written but she's never answered. I suppose that she's moved, or that I have the wrong address."

"What's her name?"

"Mrs. Webster Catt."

"Not a pleasant name," said Cadman, "I'll keep my eye open for her, and when I locate her, I'll let you know."

"O, thank you so much!" exclaimed Betty, "Look! A storm is coming up over the mountain. Is it not wonderful?"

"Let us rest here on the rock and watch it," said Cadman. "We have time to get home after."

So together they watched the storm approach.

At first the entire mountain seemed overhung with black, ominous clouds. The great calm preceding a storm filled the atmosphere, making it heavy and foreboding.

"It's just like a heart before a great sorrow, isn't it?" she asked dreamily.

"What is?" asked Cadman vaguely.

"Why, every mountain has a heart, you know," answered Betty. "Now she feels a terrible premonition. Something is wrong. She's brooding over it."

Cadman looked up at the clouds in silence.

A lurid streak of lightning lit up the darkness. Another, and another, each more vivid than the last!

"Look! Her great sorrow strikes her! Lash upon lash! It hurts her—it is so vivid and sharp!"

"Fanciful child!" exclaimed Cadman, following the girl's gaze with interest.

"Suddenly there was a rift in the clouds,—the black

masses rolled apart from each other and a soft, snowy cloud appeared.

"Now, what?" asked Cadman curiously.

"A friend has come," returned Betty quietly. "A sweet comforting friend, trying to console and help her."

The black clouds assumed a beautiful purple hue, and the white one gradually became the palest pink.

"See! she's letting in a little sunshine, and the sorrow isn't quite so black!" continued the child.

Another flash of lightning and a distant rumbling of thunder!

"Ah! she's hurt again! But see! The friend stays!"

"Can you see the rain?" asked Cadman. "It's coming down hard on the other side of the mountain!"

"Yes, in spite of her friend, she's crying her heart out. She's so unhappy!"

Then in the most brilliant hues, two long rain-bows arched their colors over the mountain, throwing a radiance through the darkness that was gloriously beautiful!

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Cadman, contemplating this western scene with delight. "What now, little one?" he asked.

"God's love," said Betty softly. "God's love, casting it's beauty over every sorrow however dark!"

Cadman looked at her in silence,—then he stood up and took her hands.

"Come Betty, let us get home now,—you'll be tired, working your brain and body on this your first day out!"

So hand in hand they walked home, not saying much,—Cadman wishing he could linger one week longer

in this primitive little town, and Betty feeling vaguely sad at the thought of parting with her new found friend.

* * * * *

Alone in her room, Betty stood gazing at herself in her mirror. She saw a tear-stained face and dejected countenance with large, sad eyes.

"Now, Betty Emmit," she said to herself, in a low sobbing voice, "Will it do you one bit of good to cry? That won't bring him back. He's gone, gone, gone! You might as well dry your tears, and brace up and try to be of some use to somebody. Just a few years and you'll go to New York—a real grown young lady, and who knows? Maybe—" here a smile flashed across her tear stained face and Betty blushed.

Then she took from her bureau a photo of her ideal friend. Dr. Cadman's eyes seemed to smile at her reassuringly.

"Yes, stranger things have happened," she said feeling a little less unhappy. "I must pray every night that God will make it possible!"

To Betty, God was her constant ever-present friend, and her every desire went straight to the Heavenly Throne, so tonight, what she would not have breathed to her mother, was as naturally spoken of in prayer as her most ordinary desire!

And so she undressed for bed, and before seeking rest, she knelt down in the moonlight and with her usual prayers added tremulously, "Dear Father, you know how

I love him. Someday let me be his wife for all eternity!"

One hour later, Mrs. Emmet peeped in to discover Betty fast asleep with Dr. Cadman's picture clasped close to her breast. The moonlight made sweeter the smile on Betty's face.

"Poor Betty," murmured the mother in sympathy. "She does take such deep affections—we'll all miss him, but not like she will!" and so only half understanding the heart of her own child, she gently closed the door and left Betty to her dreams.

CHAPTER IV.

Society's Nothingness and Its Sacrifice.

Our scenes change to New York, six years later.

"Bridge" at Mrs. Lambert's! Every lady within her circle of friends, rejoiced when the date for such an event occurred. First, because Mrs. Lambert was at all times a charming hostess. Second, and chiefly, she was as generous as she was charming. At her affairs, the prizes offered were the most expensive the society season of that special set produced.

Now, Mrs. Lambert was in her glory today. She was about to entertain a guest of importance, namely. Miss Edith Esterbrook, twenty-year-old daughter of a very wealthy and distinguished family, for whom she had many years possessed a "social longing." Through careful and tactful maneuvers the great privileged intimacy with the Esterbrooks was at last established, and today, for the first time, Mrs. Lambert could introduce Miss Edith to her willing circle. The few times that she had met the girl, she noticed her quiet reserved beauty with a sort of awe. Rumor declared that society counted her an intellectual bore and only tolerated her for her family's sake. But that mattered little to Mrs. Lambert's aspiring mind. The only daughter of the Esterbrooks could afford to be eccentric. Her individual character was the last consideration.

A half hour before the guests arrived, the hostess descended to the parlors. Hastily she scanned the tables for card-playing, and noticed with satisfaction that her new maid had intelligence enough to arrange every detail most satisfactorily. Then she walked over to the long table in the farthest room, and inspected the array of refreshments spread daintily for a buffet luncheon. Everything conceivably appropriate was there to tempt the most fastidious tastes of the "bridge players." There was absolutely nothing to criticize—the arrangement was perfect—and Mrs. Lambert trilled a gay little song in a low happy contralto, as she sailed through the large spacious rooms, to view herself in the long mirror.

Her dark, massive brown hair was thrown gracefully back in a full fluffy pompadore effect. Beneath this luxuriance, a face of sensitive delicate beauty smiled contentedly. The small, regular features seemed perfectly in harmony, one with the other, and the dark blue eyes were kind.

The world had used Mrs. Lambert well, and with customary ease, she had used the world well; that is, that part of the world which she met daily in her own sphere. There was absolutely nothing aggressive in her nature. She would not care to search to find out how "the other half lived." Her nature was the type that smiles impartially on all and calmly sums up the philosophy of life in one trite phrase—"Live and let live." From her earliest remembrance, she was admired, petted and loved, and now after nine years of married life, her husband was still obedient to her every capricious whim.

The "outer woman" responded quickly to all this lavished happiness, but the 'inner woman' possessed the restless spirit which such dormant life creates, and only was her light gay temperament preserved by a constant searching after and indulging in petty excitement.

As the mirror reflected back her graceful figure, charming even in the difficult lines of the strictly "Directoire," she noticed with a childish petulant frown, that the pale blue satin was not dark enough to enhance the color of her eyes.

"Pshaw!" she exclaimed softly. "My eyes must be changing either in color or in sight. I thought I had matched them perfectly. Perhaps it is the light."

But turn her graceful head as she would, the eyes still looked darker than the dress. She gave a little sigh and dismissed the frown. Then she turned from the mirror, and dropped into a soft nest of cushions in a cozy window seat.

As the bell announced an arrival, Mrs. Lambert slowly arose while the maid opened the door.

"May I speak with Mrs. Lambert, please?" asked a soft, gentle voice, and Mrs. Lambert caught a glimpse of Miss Esterbrook, as she entered the foyer and turned toward the reception room.

The hostess immediately came forward, graciously extending her hand in welcome.

"I'm so glad to see you have come early. It will indeed be a pleasure to visit a little while before the game starts," she said.

At a glance she took in the general pleasing effect

of the tall slim figure, and graceful poise of the head, massed with an abundance of golden hair. Her face of the Madonna type, was rather too pale in its fairness, but deep violet eyes lent color and its sweet expressiveness was attractive.

"I don't know how to tell you why I have come so early," she returned in a natural, musical voice, quite exceptional in these days of high staccato and affected tremolos. "Indeed, when you planned this reception for me, I ought to have guessed you would entertain with 'Bridge.' But you didn't mention it to me, and thoughtlessly I did not ask. Afterwards, mother received cards, but she mislaid them. She did not mention the game until today. Can you forgive me when I tell you that I do not play 'Bridge?'"

"You do not play 'Bridge?'" asked Mrs. Lambert incredulously. For a moment she searched her guest's face in silent astonishment, her cheeks flushing hotly with the thought of the social defeat this afternoon would bring.

The violet eyes never wavered but smiled kindly as they noticed her hostess' evident embarrassment.

"No, I do not play, but if you will let me stay and assist you entertain, I shall feel that my sin is forgiven."

Mrs. Lambert sighed relief. "O, if you will stay," she replied smiling once more at ease, "we will all be so glad to teach you."

"I thoroughly understand the game," answered the girl gravely, "I have always enjoyed it, but I have been

persuaded to give it up—a matter of conscience entirely, and two weeks ago I promised to never play again.”

Mrs. Lambert’s face rippled with amusement.

As her maid took the guest’s wrap, Mrs. Lambert linked her arm cordially into that of Miss Esterbrook.

“Come, we have just ten minutes to ourselves. I want you to sit by me, and confidentially tell me just how wicked I am—for I adore ‘Bridge!’ ”

Edith felt the charm of the elder woman, and she smiled brightly as they seated themselves in the cozy window seat.

“I fear I could not persuade you,” she said thoughtfully, “We all look at things from different standpoints, do we not?”

“Then from what standpoint could you prove my ‘Bridge’ playing wrong?” Mrs. Lambert asked, dropping her playful mood, and becoming momentarily interested.

The dark eyes seemed to deepen their color, and an intensely earnest expression pervaded her countenance.

“Mrs. Lambert, is not *everything* a sin which cultivates a small conception of life? Is it not a blight on our social life, that women delight in spending all their spare afternoons in playing cards?”

“I see no harm in such a means to sociability. We must have something to bring us together,” Mrs. Lambert replied quietly.

“You have spoken the truth,” Edith returned gravely. “We must have *something* to bring us together, and that *something* has by common consent become a profitless game of cards. Where has that spirit of womanhood

flown that prompted our mothers and grandmothers to gather together in sewing bees, or in musical cliques, or even in reading afternoons?"

Mrs. Lambert puckered her brow in mock despair.

"O, my dear girl, you find fault with us for taking life a little easier than our grandmothers, who used to work even in their playtime, while their husbands sat by and smoked. I really think that we ought to congratulate ourselves that we have learned to enjoy ourselves a little and let the men do the hustling."

Edith relaxed her thoughts and smiled slightly. "I see you are determined to be amused at me," she said pleasantly. "There may come a day when women will find a still greater way to enjoy life. I am not so sure that we are happier for your boasted advancement."

"Not happier, but less unhappy," Mrs. Lambert returned with the slightest shade in her laughing eyes.

"Ah; that is it!" the girl responded eagerly. "But won't you drop these wasteful days? Why don't you choose the *happiest*, the *best*?"

She had forgotten herself in her enthusiasm, and had leaned forward, placing her hand on the other's arm detainingly.

Mrs. Lambert's petulant frown gathered quickly.

"You speak as though persuading me from some fearful sin," she returned coldly.

Edith drew her hand away and a crimson flush surmounted her face.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Lambert, I speak too freely.

You are offended. But I thought that you wouldn't mind."

For a moment Mrs. Lambert looked intently down at the girl's downcast face. The frown slowly vanished. Then the old sunny smile came back, and her hand impulsively sought that of Edith's.

"No, I'm not offended. You are just too new for me, that is all. New things always irritate me. I like the smooth and trodden path. But you must talk with me again some time." She laughed softly. "On top I don't like it at all, but down deep, it feels real good and refreshing. You are like a whiff of fresh air in a long closed room. I don't like the draught, but I do like the fresh air! Can you understand?"

Edith laughed a genuine girlish laugh.

"Then we must not open the window too suddenly!" she exclaimed brightly, and the two women looked frankly into each other's eyes.

The guests arriving prevented further conversation.

Edith found herself introduced to about fifty ladies, all of whom were "charmed" to meet her. She was very much accustomed to meeting strangers who were desirous of knowing the daughter of Mr. Esterbrook, but she cared little for these affairs. She enjoyed meeting individuals, but not numbers. When the room became full of chatty women, all indulging in the same light small talk, Edith became bored. She tried not to show it. Unconsciously she assumed an air of quiet reserve, which some mistook for hauteur. So, in spite of her beauty, she was not popular, and had she not borne the name of Ester-

brook, society would have frozen her out. This afternoon she tried to be pleasing, but it was at best a forced attempt. The girl so animated and at home before the guests arrived, became silent and constrained when the room was filled. This irritated Mrs. Lambert considerably.

When asked by most of the ladies individually, "Why, *surely* you play Bridge?"—Edith seemed capable of only one reply, "Yes, but I have been persuaded to never play again." The ladies raised their brows and exchanged glances. Most of them had heard that Edith was eccentric, so they asked no further questions. It seemed to Mrs. Lambert that she might have given some other reply—not just to show her disapproval of the game that they all enjoyed. The momentary understanding between Edith and herself was soon almost entirely erased by impatience at the girl's frankness.

However, with the guests, the game soon became all absorbing. Of course "Bridge" players of the "Mediocre Social Set" are not for a moment considered gamblers. The prizes are simply the token of good-will from the hostess to her guests. But considering this truth, it was wonderfully interesting to note the zest and feverish excitement with which these ladies played for two long hours. After each game, five minutes' relaxation took place, in which precious moments, the ladies sauntered up to the refreshment table and renewed their energy for the next onslaught. While munching various sweet nothings, they exchanged light appropriate gossip, and learned the minor details concerning friend or foe, as only a

"Bridge" could reveal. At last the final game was to be played. All became still as death, and every eye watched the play of each card with feverish excitement. For many, this last game meant the decision for a prize in their favor. O no! these ladies were not gamblers! They were there for the social gathering—the game was a mere pastime! But how interesting would be a "Bridge" party *without* prizes? Have you ever tried it, hostess? Would you have the courage? In the same breath that you assure me, "My friends are not gamblers," I hear you say, "But a bridge without prizes would fall *so flat!*"

When the guests were all departed, Mrs. Lambert dressed for dinner in a rather petulant mood. Her afternoon was decidedly a failure. The main object of the entertainment was to introduce Miss Esterbrook to her own circle, and to feel the honor of the introduction belonged to herself. After all her anticipations, her friends showed plainly their decided indifference to Edith.

Mr. Lambert's non-appearance at the dinner-hour added to her ruffled mood.

For one hour she awaited him in her boudoir. During that time, she gave herself up to thoughts now irritating, now pensive. While waiting, she lolled in a nest of cushions. She looked very alluring in her soft, cream-colored gown, and even the little frown, flitting with her thoughts, did not lessen the charm of her childish beauty.

Edith's words came persistently to her mind—"Why don't you choose the happiest, the best?" The words had a disturbing effect. They insinuated that she,—Alma Lambert—was not choosing the happiest and best.

It is strange how our lives often prepare us for a certain phrase to strike home. So the last month had prepared Alma. If she had met Edith two months sooner, scarcely would her question have been noticed. Anyway, it would have been laughed at as eccentric and prudish, and then been forgotten. But the last month had brought a disturbing element into Alma's even existence. Her husband's irritability, so unprecedented in a man of such unbounded good-nature, was a surprisingly new condition to be met with. Often he would come home, tired and haggard, and after the usual fond greeting and caress, he would begin quite unreasonably to talk of money and business depression.

When she declared she did not like to talk or hear about business affairs, he would give some biting reply that made her wince, as if struck by a lash. Before, he had always laughed at her indifference, but he suddenly changed, demanding her interest in all kinds of stupid details.

She couldn't understand this change in him. She didn't try to understand it. But she felt the unpleasantness of the atmosphere, and vague fears of a coming storm shook her habitual complacency.

To night she was more fearful than usual.

An hour after dinner-time, and her husband not home! It had happened many times lately, but never without a telephoned excuse.

"Why don't you choose the best, the happiest?"

The thought brought a little stab from conscience. Perhaps she was not sympathetic enough—perhaps she

ought to show more interest in her husband's business, and that made him unlike himself.

It was a new thought that brought a doubt of herself. She was accustomed to receive affection and to give it only in return. But now circumstances determined differently.

They urged her to take the initiative. This was not easy for her to do, but she longed for the old easy way of loving and spoiling. Perhaps this vague longing and unrest prompted her to surprise her husband to-night, with an extra show of patience and affection. Doubtless he would come home in one of his unattractive moods.

A big sigh of relief accompanied her resolve, and she murmured gently,

"Will is a good old boy anyway, and has always done everything I wished." That summed up her ideal of a perfect husband. So she concluded to spoil him a little in return.

The door opened and Will Lambert entered. Alma started from her nest of cushions.

"Why, Will, how pale you are!" she said kindly, holding out both hands as he came towards her.

He took them both and put them to his lips. Then he kissed the cherry mouth, raised sweetly to his.

"Fatigue and hunger, darling," he said in a weary voice.

"Come then to dinner. I have not dined. Just waited and worried over you. Why didn't you telephone?"

"I didn't intend to be late. Have been walking the

streets for an hour, thinking, thinking, thinking. Forgot the hour entirely!"

"Will! Walking the streets! What can possess you!"

"An evil spirit doubtless," he returned with a sad attempt to smile.

During the meal, his color returned and he talked considerably. But Alma noticed his tone was forced, and his dark deep-set eyes had a new haunted expression.

"Where is Harold?" he suddenly asked, looking at the empty chair where their eight year old boy usually sat.

"Harold! why Will, dear, what is making you so strange? You know he retires two hours before this."

"O yes," he replied absently. "I missed the little fellow—that is all. Never thought about the time."

Alma contemplated her husband with a sort of pity.

"He's so worn out, he really acts queer," she thought with a new consideration possessing her.

Dinner over, they retired to their cozy library where the logs burned brightly and all looked cheerful comfort.

"Come, dear," said Alma, drawing his big chair nearer to the fire, and placing a cushion for his feet.

Will looked his surprise. Never before had she attempted to wait upon him. He had always been the willing slave.

"Thank you, dear," he said tenderly, and he dropped his stalwart form into the chair with relief.

Alma reached for his paper and then drew a cigar from the stand. Both she handed to him smiling.

He took them but laid them aside.

"No, no, Alma. I want only you to-night." And he drew her down lovingly into his lap.

Could it be possible that her slight effort had brought back the old perfect order of things again? Will was his old self, lovingly tender, to-night. Weary, yes, but not the slightest irritable. He looked at her long and fixedly for a few moments and she returned his gaze with a sweet questioning smile.

"Alma, I'm fearfully worried to-night over business."

"Forget it, Will," she said lightly, placing her cool hand on his hot forehead. "You say you only want *me*—then think only of *me*."

"As usual, you don't want to be bothered talking about it," he said with a shade of impatience.

"No, no, Will" she answered quickly. "*I want to talk with you to-night. You must tell me every ugly detail. Perhaps I can help you.*"

He held her out at arms' length, and eyed her curiously.

"Whence this change? Too bad it didn't come sooner. It is too late now," he said cynically.

Alma felt hurt. Her first attempt to be unselfish he repulsed. Her little petulant frown appeared, and the light died from her eyes.

Instantly his tone changed. Drawing her face down to his, he murmured tenderly,

"Smile, dearest. I need it. Yes, the change has come too late, but thank God it has come. You will have many chances to show your courage, dear."

She drew away from him like a frightened child.
O, Will, what *is* going to happen?"

"God alone knows, Alma." Then his eyes shot a sudden fire and the grasp of his hand hurt.

"Alma, whatever does happen, remember that you are mine,—mine always! Tell me, could you ever forget *that?*" he questioned almost fiercely.

Alma's sensitive form quivered, and her eyes filled. She tried to draw her hands away, but he held them firm.

"You frighten me, Will. Of course I'm always yours. What troubles you, dear?" she asked tremulously.

A great tenderness superseded his sterner mood. He folded her gently in his arms.

"You have said it, dear. I am so doubtful about everything to-night. I was almost foolish enough to think you wouldn't."

Her white arms lovingly encircled his neck and he could feel her tears wet his face.

"Dear Will, I love you—more to-night than ever. I don't know why. Something new has come to me—a sort of mother-love for my poor, tired Will."

Never had he known her in such a mood. He asked no reason for it. It soothed and quieted his misery. So he gave himself up to being loved as he never before had been privileged to do.

It was ten o'clock when the bell announced a visitor. Will started from his chair.

"Who can it be at this hour?" Alma asked wonderingly.

"Who?" returned Will shortly, and they both listened.

Will seemed scarcely able to breathe, until the maid announced "Dr. Cadman."

"Let him come right in," said Will with evident relief.

Dr. Cadman entered, beaming with the freshness of a morning hour rather than tired with the late evening.

Alma and Will advanced to meet him and he took one hand of each simultaneously.

"Too bad to disturb such a happy picture,—firelight and lovelight. How we bachelors do envy you, lucky dogs!" he said, pressing their hands warmly.

"But, George, we love fine pictures, too, but unfortunately we cannot see ourselves," returned Alma laughingly.

"Sufficient that you see one another," returned the doctor banteringly.

"Now, Alma," he continued, as he seated himself near the fire, "I have just a few minutes to see Will on important business. A patient demands my attention shortly. Are you going to be a good little wife and allow us a few minutes' conversation?"

"Assuredly," and Alma smiled assent. "But I will vanish in the meantime, I'm sure to interrupt if I stay."

The two men laughed. As she opened the door, she wafted a kiss to each one and disappeared.

"Dear girl!" murmured Will.

"Dear girl! I should say so, Will. Then why on earth that sad, mournful face? I have the check, old boy! Knew you'd come home anxious, so didn't wait un-

til morning," he added, drawing an envelope from his pocket and handing it to Will. "Twenty thousand dollars you had to have, didn't you? Well, I made it \$5,000 over so that Alma couldn't suspect, from your drawing it too tight."

Will took the check mechanically. Speechless and dazed he stood, watching George with increasing pallor.

"Cousin, what ails you?" asked George with alarm.

"You're so good, that is all,—in fact, too good for a wretch like me! and to think that it won't help—all that money even can't save me now!"

Haggard and white he sank into the nearest chair and buried his face in his hands. Sobs convulsed his form as he hid his face from view.

The doctor was momentarily astounded. Will was not the kind to play the woman, and *shame?* He couldn't couple the word with Will's straight-forwardness.

He laid a strong, kind hand upon the bent head.

"Will, you're overwrought. Look up. Be a man."

Will's sobs ceased, and he met Cadman's scrutiny with a sullen doggedness.

"George, you will not call me a man after to-night. I couldn't myself, even."

"Come, out with it," returned Cadman briskly "Don't beat around the bush,—and I object to your disowning your sex!"

"For God's sake, don't joke!" exclaimed Will fiercely.

"Far from it! Be quick—what awful crime have you committed?"

George possessed a pair of keen gray eyes that compelled frankness.

Will did not hesitate.

"I've lost all—every cent, George! Got desperate. Was fooled into crazy speculation. Lost *all*—all, I say, and I'm ruined hopelessly, beyond any help of yours."

George's face became serious, and he watched Will keenly.

"Didn't I tell you that I would get the money for you tonight? Is that all?" he asked gravely. "Will, you are hiding something," he added with firmness.

"Yes, there is more," Will replied, a crimson flush surmounting to his temples. Suddenly he looked around with a hunted expression.

"George, I'm branded a *thief*! I'll be hounded to-morrow. A *thief*!—you hear me? Not a man! Alma's husband—a thief!"

George grasped his shoulder in consternation.

"You're crazy, man! Stop such names! you are exaggerating some mis-step. Tell me everything! I'll stand by you. Don't be a coward!"

The hunted expression gave way to one of misery.

"George, you're a brick, but you can't save me. When I lost my own money, I became frenzied—succeed I must or be in disgrace for debt. I don't know how I did it. I took the bank's money when sure of success—meant to put it back—speculated with it, lost all, all! I heard tonight they had discovered it. To-morrow will come the arrest. I'll be a jail-bird soon—a thief behind the bars!"

George's face became stolidly set.

"How much did you borrow?" he asked calmly.

"Fifty thousand," he answered hoarsely.

"Whew!" returned George, with a low whistle.

Both men stared into the fire with tragic silence.

"Well?" finally asked Will wearily.

George arose and slowly buttoned his coat before replying.

"I must think it over, old boy!" he said kindly, and his voice was husky through its firmness. "It's a bad case, but there must be a way out of it. I'll get here soon after daybreak. Think it over hard in the meantime. The best thing for Alma, must be your first consideration, *yourself* next."

"Alma! How can *she* bear it!"

"She'll bear it like a woman, I hope," returned George quickly. "You have run the gauntlet for her sake, haven't you? You've lived beyond your means, until debts have accumulated to your distraction. I have not been blind to all this. But I never dreamed of *this* climax."

"For *her* sake, yes, but that makes my sin no lighter," Will returned gloomily.

"But it makes it less black—anyway to those who care a heap for you!" George exclaimed, grasping Will's hand.

"*You* care, now that you know what I am?" asked Will, surprise overcoming other emotions.

"Now that I know what you are? I know that you are a man up against a devilish proposition, and all on

account of your love for a beautiful, adorable woman. You don't think that I'd break with you for that, do you?"

A glimmer of hope shot from Will's fine, dark eyes.

"You're even better than I thought you," he returned simply, and the two men parted without further remark.

As George was about to leave, Alma met him in the foyer.

"Good-bye little girl," he said gravely, "Will doesn't seem very well to-night. Don't keep him up too late, will you?"

"No, indeed. You notice then, how ill he looks?" she asked, her anxiety lending a pathos to her beauty.

"Yes, he needs a rest and no worry of any kind. I'll step in tomorrow. Good-night," and, fearing to lengthen the conversation, he left quickly.

Alma found Will, leaning forward in his chair, and gazing into the fire with a morbid intensity. So great was his absorption, that he didn't hear her enter the room. She crossed over to him, and, leaning over his chair, gently she raised his head and laid it back against the cushions.

He started slightly. "You Alma?" he said wearily. "Our pleasant little evening is over dear. You had better retire now for I must have an hour or two alone—to puzzle out a business proposition before I can sleep."

"O, Will, you are too tired. George said that you should retire early."

As she spoke, she caressed his forehead and he closed his eyes in gratitude.

After a moment he opened them upon her fondly.

"George himself gave me the problem to solve," he said gently, "I cannot sleep now. Go to dreamland, dearest, and don't make it harder for me by disputing."

"Good-night, then, if you won't come. But don't exhaust yourself, Will."

For answer he drew her down and pressed her closely to his breast.

"Good-night, Alma,—dear little wife," he said in passionate low tones. "Whatever comes, dearest, remember I have always loved you to distraction. You believe it?"

"Yes, yes. I know it, Will. Of course you have."

His strange mood disconcerted her and she was glad to go.

Kissing him lightly, she left the room, turning at the door to say smilingly,

"Remember dear, you must not linger long."

Left alone, George's words came more forcibly to Will's tortured brain.

"The best thing for Alma must be your first consideration, *yourself* next." The best thing for Alma! The best thing for Alma! Again and again the question reiterated in his mind. He was undeniably guilty. For a time he might be free—on bail until his trial—then the prison! A long torturing shame for Alma. What alternative?

He had thought of one alternative to-night. It had come to him at first as a wild intangible thought, born of despair. But it gradually took shape and became propor-

tionate to reason; he had walked the streets for an hour, courting its possibility.

The thought embodied a lie, and this was the hardest part for Will to submit to. By nature, he was honest. But for *Alma's sake*, even a lie was within his code of honor.

For one hour he debated with himself, ever bringing excuse to bear upon excuse. Finally his decision came, swift and certain. Alma must be spared the long misery of trial and imprisonment. Yes, at all costs, Alma first.

He arose quickly and went to his desk.

His hand trembled as he took the paper and placed it for writing. But he was none the less resolved for this physical weakness.

The first letter he wrote and rewrote many times.

Finally he finished it and addressed it to Alma.

The second he wrote hurriedly and without recopy. This was to George Cadman. Both letters he left on his desk.

From a small table he took two pictures—one of Alma, one of Harold—and slipping them into his pocket, he hastily made for the door. Turning suddenly, he swept the room with one comprehensive longing glance, then with a heavy sigh he disappeared.

CHAPTER V.

EDITH'S CHOICE.

From childhood, Edith Esterbrook had known George Cadman. The fact that he was ten years older than herself, rather strengthened their friendship than otherwise.

As years brought her development into womanhood, Cadman was not slow to realize and appreciate her attractions. He loved Edith with a strong devotion, which her young experience did not value. During the last year several had proposed marriage to her, but for a long time, George alone was not repulsed. To him she had not yet said a decided "No." She felt sure that her friendship's love was not the right kind of love for marriage, but she dreaded to part with him, and so, with an unconsciously selfish postponement of the final word, she had kept him by her side.

But the last month had brought a change into her life. She had met one whom she thought she could be happy in marrying,—one Howard Hester, who loved her passionately at first sight, and declared his love soon after. He was immensely rich. Riches alone could not tempt Edith, but he also seemed to possess a character which could adore her without the slightest criticism. He gained her confidence quickly. To him she confided all her noble aspirations, all her plans and projects for doing charitable

work. To all he acquiesced, encouraging anything that would add to her joy in life, and declaring his fortune at her feet. All he asked in return was for himself to be her first thought and love.

What an ideal life! Edith could think of nothing nobler. It was a shock to her parents when she declared her desire to marry Howard. She was entirely too young, and many other objections were given. But all were promptly overcome by the tactful Howard, and consent was finally gained.

Edith decided to personally tell George before her engagement was announced, and to this intent she asked him to call that evening.

As she waited for him in her parlor, she gave herself up to contrasting him with Howard.

"George is a dear," she thought regretfully, "I hope that he gets over his fondness for me soon. Strange that he seldom agreed with me in any opinion. Wonder why he cared for me? Always ready to correct me—so different from Howard! After marriage, I suppose I would have to submit every plan to George for approval, and abide by his decision. Howard is so willing to agree and so much more loving."

But with all her satisfied persuasion, Edith felt a strange pang with the thought that this evening would be the last alone with her life-long friend.

When he entered, she arose to meet him with her customary frankness.

"I have been waiting for you to call this past week as

usual, but as you didn't come I felt at liberty to send for you."

"Always, Edith," he said pressing her hand. "At any time or place, I am at your command. No one knows that better than yourself."

The meaning of his direct gaze was only too positive, and Edith felt suddenly overcome with pity and constraint. How could she tell him of her engagement, when he did not even suspect it? She colored hotly and dropped her gaze.

"My absence this week has been unavoidable," George continued, as they both sat down opposite to one another. "You have heard of my cousin, Will Lambert, and I believe you have met his wife occasionally?"

"O, yes, only a week ago I attended an afternoon affair at her home. What a pretty, attractive woman she is!"

Walter's face became grave, and his eyes looked unutterable sadness.

"O, Edith, if you could only see her now! Poor little wreck of womanhood! She is undergoing unbearable sorrow!"

Edith's eyes shot instant interest.

"O, tell me her trouble," she exclaimed quickly, forgetting the object of her bidding him to call.

"Her husband got into pretty deep trouble, and to avoid her going through the long trial and imprisonment, he committed suicide by drowning."

"Yes," George continued, "he has left it to me to try to hush it up so that his wrong-doing wouldn't become

public gossip. For a week I've tried every sort of pleading and bribery, but all of no avail,—to-morrow's newspapers will print the whole story, with as much exaggeration as they can possibly invent. Poor little Alma will be more distracted than ever!"

"O, how cruel it all seems!" exclaimed Edith, entering into his mood of passionate pity. "How I wish I could go to her!"

George's eyes flashed understanding. "And why not? A woman needs a woman's sympathy. She has no woman relative and her mother died five years ago."

"I will go to her," said Edith with calm resolve. "I'm not really a friend, but we can always come very near to a heart that is wrecked by despair."

"You could, Edith, but not everyone," he said with warm tenderness, "I have been with her every evening since it happened,—that accounts for my absence here. She clings to me in the most childishly helpless manner. I promised to go to-night, too. I would not disappoint her even at the sacrifice of an evening with you. You realize that sacrifice, Edith? I missed you, to go to one in sorrow. When may I call again?"

His tone was so tender and expectant, that Edith stood completely abashed, trying to find words to tell him her secret which would separate them forever.

"Why, George, I want always to see you," she stammered. Her eyes drooped, not daring to meet his searching gaze, "But before you go, I ought to tell you something that may change your desire to come."

"Nothing could do that," he said fervently.

She felt his tone and it spurred her to frankness.

"George," she said gently, "I hope it will not hurt you to know that I am engaged."

Great as had been the shock of Will's death, it was slight compared to the awfulness of her revelation. Of late he had felt himself on surer grounds. He hoped to win Edith. Now by one fell stroke, when his keen fine nature was vibrating with tragic sympathy, his own hopes were dashed to the ground.

And Edith herself had struck the blow!

Pale and drawn he looked at her with acute misery depicted in every strong feature.

"Edith! it's all over then—gone forever!" he exclaimed tensely.

Edith's violet eyes suffused with ready tears.

"O, George, don't! don't! I never dreamed that you would take it so to heart! We shall always, *always*, be the same old friends."

"Friends!" he returned bitterly. "What a mockery! But you are right—we will always be the same—you a friend, and I"—he paused and swept her with a glance of passionate admiration—"and I, your abject lover!"

"But, George," she began pleadingly.

"Let us not discuss it, Edith," he interrupted in his old dictative way, "It is a fierce fate that struck me two fearful blows at once. But don't worry about me, little one," he added gently, "I'm a man and can bear it. Now I will go to a little woman who has less strength to overcome."

As he held out his hand, his face became calm and

set, and no one could have guessed the strength summoned to meet the inevitable.

"Good-bye, Edith," he said, quietly. "God bless you and give you all the happiness you deserve. If you ever need a heart to share a trouble, mine is always open to you. Good-bye, little one, Good-bye."

And Edith, more overcome than George, could only murmur, "Good-bye," and let him go.

Tired, she dropped into a chair. Vaguely she wondered why he did not even ask who her future husband was to be. Suddenly came the echo of his "Good-bye, little one, good-bye," and the pathos of it filled her with a melancholy longing.

She bowed her head in her hands, and wept.

CHAPTER VI.

The Glamor gone, what is left?

Since the glowing publication of Will Lambert's dishonesty and consequent suicide, Alma had completely hid herself, and would see no one but George. Repeatedly the bell announced visitors, but to all she was "not at home," and the very sound of the bell filled her with new misery.

For three days society had had the privilege of a new scandal for gossip. In her mind's eye, Alma pictured her acquaintances exchanging views and eagerly picking up new scraps of information. In her grief she imagined they came to her for curiosity only—all the friends of whom she proudly boasted before were distorted in her feverish brain and became prying gossips, filled with a mocking pity.

It had rained steadily since morning. The long gloomy day seemed never to near its close, and Alma watched the clock with impatience for she expected George in the late afternoon. George never came in the day time before, but to-night he had a serious case, so he had promised to come to take supper with Alma and so make the unbearable evening somewhat shorter.

No visitors had bothered her to-day, and it was four o'clock when the bell first rang its cheery note through the dreary house.

"George!" Alma exclaimed rising from her chair and hastily putting a letter in her bosom,—a letter she had read and reread many times in her lonesomeness—Will's last passionate word to her, Will's whole heart unbared to her to forgive and love as never before! Too late came the wonderful revelation of a woman's true being—too late came the answering glow from a heart awakened by the passionate call of love! Will was gone from her life forever, and her lips could never utter the new things that she found revealed in herself. Only his memory remained to be cherished. But she clung to this memory with redoubled fervor. Never for a moment did she doubt his goodness. Even his double crime assumed no hideous proportions to her stricken conscience. Both were for *her* sake, and, let the world scorn him as it would, she would always consider him a fearful sacrifice to her selfish life.

This was Alma's first hard life lesson. But she learned it well. All the good lying dormant under her superficial unreal existence, suddenly became active and volcanic. Alma was the inevitable sufferer.

The maid came to her half opened door and knocked gently.

"I will be right down," Alma said, and the surprised girl hurried away without giving the card of the visitor.

Alma descended the stairs slowly, trying hard to prepare herself to give him a less forlorn welcome.

At the parlor door she halted abruptly. Surprise and consternation overspread her face. She faced Edith Esterbrook with a mixture of defiance and hauteur.

"My maid has made a mistake," she said shortly. "I

am at home to no one. You will pardon me, but I cannot receive any visitors."

Most women would have felt the keen repulse, and made a hurried exit. But Edith was not thinking of herself. She scarcely heard Alma's words. Her heart and mind were filled with the vision of grief that stood in the doorway—the pale drawn features, the sunken eyes, and the general hopeless despairing of face and form.

She advanced to Alma with two outstretched hands.

"Dear Mrs. Lambert, I have not come to you to offer my formal sympathy! Indeed no! I want to make you believe that my heart grieves with you, and longs to be a real help and comfort."

Alma looked into the sweet, pleading face. She could read only sincerity.

Mechanically she took the girl's hands.

"But I don't understand," she faltered, "why should you feel interested in me at all?"

Edith's eyes looked at her with a new light.

"I don't know why, but I am. I feel your sorrow deeply. Perhaps it is because I am so impressed with the Fatherhood of God, that when I hear of one of His children suffering, I hear His voice bidding me to go."

Alma looked at her in open wonder.

"And one so young! How can you feel this? I am much older, but I never even really believed in such a Fatherhood."

Edith led her to a settee.

"O won't you let me stay awhile with you?" she asked gently, "The day must be very long!"

Alma forgot her pride. Her mind relaxed under the strange personality of this young friend. For half an hour they talked. Indeed Alma afterward wondered why she had conversed the most. She found herself gradually confiding her innermost trials and fears—hopes she had none—and even went so far as to show Edith how she was to blame for all the disgrace, and not Will.

Finally she was in tears in Edith's arms, and Edith wept with her.

The bell rang suddenly and they drew apart.

"It is only Dr. Cadman—you know him? Don't go."

"George Cadman! no, I cannot stay. May I come again?"

"Yes, indeed. O thank you for your sweet sympathy."

Edith kissed her forehead and hurried away.

In the hallway, she met George. He took her proffered hand with no sign of emotion, and "hoped that she was well," in ordinary friendliness. Then he took from his pocket a letter.

"I was going to call upon you to give you this letter," he said gravely. "You remember me telling you of that sweet little 'Mormon' girl that I met out West? I have heard from her now and then since my return, and it hardly seems possible that now she is grown to womanhood,—just about your age. She writes that she is coming on a mission in a few weeks, and I can imagine she'll be quite a charming young lady, from what she was as a child. She'll be strange and quite lonesome at first. She says there are mission headquarters here somewhere,

but she doesn't know any of these mission people. May I bring her to call on you when she comes?"

"Yes, indeed!" returned Edith kindly, "Poor child! Alone in this big city where everyone hates the 'Mormons!' I suppose that I would be prejudiced, if you had not talked to me about them."

"You and she have a great deal in common, and I think that you will be very happy to make a real friend of her."

"We'll see. Bring her to me as soon as she comes," replied Edith brightly, and with a friendly good-bye, she left him.

"He seems not to care very much," reflected Edith, as she walked home. "After all, men soon forget," she philosophised, "I didn't want him to *suffer*, but I thought that he would care a *little*," she mused with a childish regret, which she hastily overcame with shame at her sudden selfishness.

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CHAPTER VII.

"Go, Preach the Gospel to all the World."

Ephraim was doing some talking. Everyone loved Betty Emmitt—young and old—but some wondered if she would make a good missionary. She was so full of rollicking fun, that it was not easy to imagine her setting down to the strict, sober life of a mission. However, those who knew her well, knew her deep religious nature, which after all was the motive power of her young life and the source of her merry sunshine disposition.

A farewell party was to be given to Betty at the town hall. Posters were everywhere hung, and the admonition was given for every one to be present. The only ones excused would be "tired husbands" who should send money by their wives.

Betty stood reading one of these posters and laughed to herself.

"Whoever wrote that! The very idea! Here's for equal rights!"

From her pocket, she took her pencil and wrote underneath,

"*'Tired wives'* will send money by their husbands!"

"What right have you, to touch those public posters?" said a voice that made her turn quickly.

She faced the young man with mock defiance.

"They're *my* posters, aren't they?"

"Not a bit of it," he replied; his blue eyes laughing into her merry, brown ones. "*Nothing* belongs to you now,—*you* belong to everybody, *Miss Missionary!*"

"Indeed!" returned the girl, tossing her curls. "Perhaps, then, you'd like to take the 'public property' home for safe keeping until to-night?"

"Just why I stopped the car!" exclaimed the youth delighted. "You shouldn't be wandering around the streets tiring yourself out, for to-night everyone will want to have a 'farewell' dance with you!"

Betty jumped into the car, her companion following, and the machine raced off. Once off Main St., Stanley Todd slackened his machine. He turned to Betty tenderly.

"So girlie, you're off for two whole years? Suppose when you come back, you'll look down on Ephraim, and such as me."

Betty looked up at the bright face, bronzed by the sun and outdoor-life of the mountains. Her eyes softened, and sudden tears filled her lovely eyes.

"When Betty Emmit forgets Ephraim and her old friends," she replied soberly, "the sun will cease to shine!"

"By heck! that sounds just like you!" said the lad, and he gave her arm an affectionate squeeze. "I wish, though," he added hesitatingly, "you'd be engaged to me before you leave!"

Betty's forehead puckered thoughtfully,—then she frankly answered. "Stanley, why do you say that again? It's no sense to be engaged when one is not in love. You know that I think just heaps of you—as a real, real

brother. I'll never be in love—don't really know what that means,—so you ought to be satisfied."

"I suppose that I'll have to be," he returned with a sigh. "Well, we won't cry over it," he said smiling down on her, and giving his machine a little spurt. "May I escort you to the dance, to-night?"

"Yes," she replied, smiling back at him.

"That'll be some pleasure anyway—to take you to your 'farewell,' " he said happily.

Betty's eyes flashed merriment.

"I couldn't tell you how many I have said 'yes' to, when they have made the same request."

"Then I am to be one of a bunch?" he asked disappointedly.

"I belong to everyone—you said it, didn't you?"

"You're incorrigible, Betty!" was his hopeless answer.

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Betty's farewell was a gay little affair. Men, women and children came, everyone bringing a piece of money, from a dime to a dollar, according to his or her means.

Betty was the centre of adoring friends, all wishing her "Godspeed" on her mission, and success in spreading the restored Gospel. And at this little party, there was no long-faced preaching done. Everyone was glad and smiling, and a "farewell" to a "Mormon" missionary, meant a child-like display of goodwill and brotherly love,—such as no other church on the face of God's earth, had yet begun to realize.

The young people made merry in their innocent

happy way, and the spirit of true religion reigned over all,—not the spirit of lifeless piety!

The next day Betty was busy making preparations for departure the following day, and saying her “good-byes.”

There were a number of calls she felt that she must make, on the old or sick, all of whom would be unhappy not to say good-bye to her,—for Ephraimites were all like one big family, and a loving relationship was really felt among its numbers.

As Betty passed through the streets, more than one honest man came up to her, and grasping her little soft hand in his large work-calloused one, wished her good luck in a husky voice, and offered her his hard earned dollar for her mission.

O you luke-warm, respectable churches of the world! Where or when did any of you possess whole congregations of Christians filled with the simplicity and fervor of Christ's Gospel as these rugged mountaineers? Why don't you hesitate before you open your doors to money-making anti-Mormon lecturers, to satisfy the morbid cravings of some of your people to hear the fantastic and obscene wanderings of Satanic minds! If angel hosts brought glad tidings to your church doors, how small a congregation would be yours! You poor struggling minister of the world! Does it never occur to you that the prophecy is being fulfilled?

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts will they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.” (I Tim. 4:3.)

You know that to fill your churches, you must have preachers lay aside simple Gospel truths, and entice the masses with the political excitement of the day, or the glamor of some rare literary achievements.

Who, in a great city like New York, ever prepared to attend a church service with the firm assurance that he would hear the Gospel of Christ preached? Thanks to some few conscientious unpopular preachers, we may attend some churches with that hope, but one will always find the "good" minister preaching to as many empty pews as listeners. Is it any wonder then, that the earnest, enthusiastic, "Mormon," coming to the great cities with nothing more exciting than the simple truth,—is it any wonder he is mocked, reviled and scorned? "Bring us something new and exciting or we don't want it!" cries the big city.

But Betty in her worldly ignorance, had yet to learn—she took the money offered to her with a heart filled with enthusiasm and love for the whole world. She thanked God for it all. Every penny helped her to take God's message to a "waiting world,"—she really believed that the world was waiting for the truth,—and was happy in the thought of being called to be the messenger. And so, between tears at partings and joy over her great mission, she found her feelings rather mixed and strange, as she boarded the train for the unknown East!

Friends waved her out of sight, prayers followed her from loving hearts, yet before her lay the great experience,—the knowledge of the world!

CHAPTER VIII.

The Way of a Missionary.

The trip to New York was a great pleasure to Betty. A number of missionaries traveled together, and most of the time she was on the observation platform, enjoying the scenery and chatting with her companions.

When they reached New York, Betty's excitement was at its height. At last she was in that Great New York—the city that she had dreamed of for years—and the city where Dr. Cadman lived. As she came out of the Hudson Terminal building, the noise and clamor seemed to deafen her. Two missionaries from Brooklyn, met the party to take them to headquarters in Brooklyn. Betty clung to the arm of one of her traveling companions, and allowed herself to be led, silent and dazed, through the winding streets to the Brooklyn Bridge. It was just six o'clock when all the Brooklyn men were returning from their business in New York. The clamor of gongs and rushing of people frightened Betty and made her ask an Elder what had happened.

"O, that's only Brooklyn Bridge at rush hour," replied the Elder, smiling. "You'll get used to that soon. Sounds queer after Utah, doesn't it?"

"It isn't like this everywhere, is it?" she asked disappointed.

"O, no!" laughed the Elder, "There are some quiet nooks."

Betty felt herself lifted off her feet and with the crowd, pushed into a trolley. The seats were all taken by those who "knew how," but Betty took hold of a strap, and looked around for her companions. They were jammed in at the other end of the car, and though they waved to her, she suddenly felt strangely alone. For the first time, a feeling of homesickness crept over her. This great crowded city with human beings like flies, and big tall buildings towering over narrow streets—was this New York? For twenty minutes the car dragged, and every little while stopped to crowd more in, until everyone was pushing the next. The crowd took it all as though accustomed to it. Not a word or look of anger was given. Some of the passengers appeared to be pale and tired, but all were tolerant.

Betty's mind traveled back to Ephraim's openness and ease, and then came back to present surroundings. She looked out to see the streets through which they passed. She only got a glimpse of the river, but it gave her a cool breath of air that was refreshing. Then came narrow business streets, with screeching elevated railroads overhead.

"Trains traveling through the air! How strangely awful!" thought Betty. But it was exciting, even though she hated it. At last the car turned into a quiet, residential street, and Betty breathed once more.

When the car stopped and the whole missionary party alighted, Betty was again her calm composed self.

"This is our Church, and next to it, is the Mission House," explained one of the Elders.

Everyone looked at the beautiful white stone church with interest and admiration, and then at the large, red brick house beside it.

"How homelike it is!" exclaimed Betty, feeling her depression leaving her. "Do we missionaries live there?"

The Elder looked at her with pity.

"Not much!" he said, laughing, "We're scattered all over—wherever we can get a room,—but we always like to come here and get warmed up, you know!"

All the young people laughed.

"Sister Emmet, don't think that missionaries have it easy," said one young, rosy-cheeked girl, who looked as though hardship would be fun for her.

"I didn't mean it to be easy," returned Betty, flushing hotly, "I simply asked a question."

At this time they had reached the door of the mission home, which was opened to receive them. There, in the doorway, stood a stout, portly looking man of about forty years. His round, candid face was full of good nature and hospitality. His keen, blue eyes scanned the party with interest.

"Come right in," he said, heartily, "Guess you're all tired, eh? Well, you've come to a good resting place, and the dinner's about ready for all."

Betty's heart went right out to this jovial Mission President, and she felt "cheered up," as she afterwards expressed it.

The party found a warm welcome and a good din-



"Everyone looked at the beautiful white stone church, and then at the large red brick house beside it."

ner. The President's wife was no less hospitable than President Gladder himself, and everyone seemed merry and happy.

About nine o'clock, Betty and Dell Siegler were escorted by one of the Elders to a house not far from the Mission House.

"This will be your home, until President Gladder has assigned you your companion and field of labor," he explained, as he rang the bell.

"When will that be?" asked Betty.

"In a day or so," he answered.

The door was opened by a neat, thin little old lady. Introductions over, the Elder left them.

"I'll take you right to your room, young ladies,—follow me."

The tone was kindly polite, but to Betty's sensitive ears, it sounded strangely business-like. They followed the old lady up three flights of stairs, and then into a square back room.

Betty watched her light the "welsbach," which was quite a curiosity to her.

"Put the gas out carefully when you go to bed," she said. "Sometimes it turns all the way round and the gas escapes," and with this admonition and a pleasant "goodnight," she was gone.

Dell and Betty looked around the room, and then at each other.

"It's stuffy, don't you think? Let's open the windows," said Dell.

"What is that for?" asked Betty curiously, looking at one corner of the room.

"O, that is a little cook stove—my sister told me she had one on her mission. See!" and Dell pushed aside a faded cretonne curtain. "Here are all the dishes and cooking utensils. We prepare our own meals, you know."

"Not in our bed-room, surely!" exclaimed Betty.

"Why, of course we do!" laughed Dell. "You don't seem to know much about missionaries' ways. Even the Elders have to live this way."

Betty felt ashamed to have expressed her feelings so, but she was ready to do anything for her mission work.

"I hope that you won't think me fussy," she said apologetically, "I'm willing to do anything for my mission. But it does seem strange at first, doesn't it?"

"It surely does," replied Dell, "and I guess you'll think of your roomy Ephraim home many times when you are eating, sleeping, and studying in one little coop like this."

"But we won't be in it much, will we?"

"That's the big part of it—we won't," laughed Dell.

The two girls got into bed and then thought of the gas.

"Betty, I don't understand gas-jets,—will you put it out?"

"I'm afraid to," returned Betty anxiously. "I know they're dangerous,—I saw her put a match ~~over~~ it. Wasn't that queer? But I'm not sure how to put it out."

"To be on the safe side," said Dell, practically, "Leave it alight. It may keep us awake a bit, but I'd just like a good talk or—"

"Or what?"

"O, I know I'll get homesick. Hurry up, Betty, talk! Just talk! I feel it coming on!"

"So do I," said Betty with quivering lips. "I don't believe I *can* talk—much."

That was enough.

Dell's head dived into the pillow, and her little slim figure shook with sobs.

This was too much for Betty. For a few moments she stroked the fair head of her companion, with admirable self-control, but when Dell pulled her over and hugged her close, Betty's tears came thick and fast.

At last Dell sat up in bed with determination.

"We're fine missionaries, Betty, to act like this!" she said sternly.

"Don't worry about that," said Betty, smiling through her tears. "They say that the best surgeons are those who faint at the first operation!"

"That's so!" agreed Dell, "I wouldn't go back, would you?"

"Of course not!" replied Betty, "We're out on the Lord's work! But we're only girls, after all, and we'll feel lots better to cry it out. I guess everyone does, but don't tell anyone, will you?"

"Of course not!" promised Dell.

"Come, let's get to sleep before—"

"All right,"—and the two girlish heads were soon ly-

ing quietly close together with their tear-stained faces upturned to the bright light of the mysterious "welsbach."

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In the morning Betty roused her companion.

"I'm so hungry, Dell. Let us hurry to the Mission Home for breakfast."

On their way out they asked the landlady to turn off the gas.

"Land!" exclaimed the old lady indignantly. "You didn't burn my gas all night? And gas is expensive, too, I'll tell you!"

Betty stood dumb, while Dell apologized.

"I thought the West knew gas when they saw it!" snapped the old lady as she shut the door in their faces.

Dell and Betty walked out of the house in silence.

When in the street, Betty laughed.

"Quite motherly, wasn't she?" Dell, I do hope you'll be my companion. We'll start a diary together."

The bright morning air made them both laugh with the zest of youth.

As they entered the mission home, Mrs. Gladder kissed them both.

"Sleep well, girls?"

"O yes, thank you," answered the girls, looking at one another with a smile that one of the Elders passing them, was sure to detect.

As Mrs. Gladder led the way to breakfast; he said to the girls in a stage whisper,

"Never mind, girls! they all do it!"

"Do what?" asked Betty demurely.

"O *you* know,—but don't feel embarrassed. Every night you'll feel better."

Sister Gladder turned. "Brother Eldridge," she said laughing, "if you don't stop teasing, I'll have to report you to President Gladder!"

At this, the young man laughed heartily, and the girls joined in.

The second night they decided that they had been foolish, and laughed themselves to sleep, with the gas turned off and the moonlight streaming in at their little high windows.

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CHAPTER IX.

Betty's New Friends.

Betty's hand trembled as she took off the receiver of the phone at the Mission Home. She gave the number of Dr. Cadman's office. After all these years she was going to speak with this friend, her ideal of manhood.

"Is this Dr. Cadman?" she asked of the pleasant "Hello."

"It is," came the answer.

"This is Betty Emmet," replied Betty in dignified tones. "I just arrived in Brooklyn yesterday."

"Why, Betty," came in jovial tones. "I'm real glad to hear your voice. Where are you anyway?"

"At Mission Headquarters. Could you come over to see me?"

"Not until about eight this evening. Will that do?"

"Yes," returned Betty delightedly. "By then I will know just what I'm going to do."

"Very well. Tonight at eight. Good-bye, Betty."

"Good-bye, Dr. Cadman," was returned.

Betty hung up the receiver, with a great happiness filling her girlish heart. New York didn't seem lonesome after all!

"So you have a friend in New York?" pleasantly

asked President Gladder, from his desk where he sat writing.

"O yes, a friend who is going to help me with my missionary work."

"Tell me about him," said the mission president, and he listened thoughtfully to Betty's story of her friendship with Dr. Cadman.

"Sounds good," he declared, smiling as she finished her recital, "But don't forget the missionary rules. Whenever he takes you, along goes your companion. Perhaps you would like to know who your companion is to be? I have decided that Dell Siegler and you would be just about suited to one another."

"O, I'm so glad," exclaimed Betty. "We did so hope that we could be companions."

President Gladder had a way of beaming on the young people, when he had made them happy.

"That's good," he returned happily. "Now, Betty, you can be a great power in the mission field, if you put your whole mind and soul on your work."

"I will, President Gladder," promised Betty seriously.

"I want you to labor in New York for about one month. This Dr. Cadman, will doubtless make it easy for you to be introduced there. After that, you and your companion must go to Boston. So make the most of your one month here and get a room in New York as soon as possible." And with a kindly nod of dismissal, President Gladder resumed his writing, and Betty left the room.

"Only one month in New York!" she thought with disappointment. "Well, Betty, you're out for work, not pleasure," she said to herself, bravely.

That evening at eight o'clock, Dr. Cadman, called.

Betty never forgot the delight of that first interview. He was so kind to her and so delighted with everything at the Mission Home. She felt very proud as she introduced him to the president and his family, for Dr. Cadman was strikingly attractive, and she could see that President Gladder took an instant liking to him.

For about an hour they chatted and then on going, the arrangement was made for Betty and her companion to meet Dr. Cadman the following day, and he would help them to find a place to live.

That night Betty retired with a heart full of thankfulness—for just exactly what, she couldn't say herself.

"You look beamingly happy," remarked Dell, as they undressed to retire.

"I feel so," returned Betty brightly.

When the light was out, and Dell fast asleep, Betty lay awake for a long time, watching the moon slowly rise over the housetops.

"He's just more wonderful than ever!" she declared to herself. "I must think of my mission, though, and not of him. I wonder—" and there Betty left off her thinking and sank into a sweet dreamy rest.

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The next day, Betty and Dell met Dr. Cadman, as appointed—at his office.

"Now, girls," he said, happily, after greetings were exchanged, "I'm going to take you right up to a friend of mine. I telephoned to her this morning that you were coming, and maybe she knows of a place for you."

Driving along Fifth avenue and Riverside Drive, in Dr. Cadman's machine, made New York appear very different from the view presented to the girls when coming out of the Hudson terminal into crowded streets. The city seemed to Betty a most wonderfully attractive place at this stage of her experience

At last they drew up in front of Edith's home, a beautiful house in the West Eighties.

As they entered and Dr. Cadman introduced them to Edith Esterbrook, both girls felt slightly embarrassed at the strangeness of this New York home.

"It's all so grand and formal," thought Betty.

But Edith soon had the girls feeling quite at ease, entering into their plans and work with real interest.

"So you are looking for a home for one month?" asked Edith kindly.

"Just one room," answered Betty shyly. "Do you know anyone with a house-keeping room we could rent?"

Edith and Dr. Cadman exchanged smiles.

"I can't say I do," returned Edith amused. "None of my friends rent rooms. But I'm going to ask you both to spend a month here,—as my visitors. Of course, you'll

be busy all the time, I know, but you may come and go as you wish, and you'll feel you have a home to come to instead of a stranger's house."

"Do you really mean it?" exclaimed Betty, forgetting her shyness, and becoming her old bright, impulsive self.

Dell looked happy, but rather doubtful.

"Betty, it's awfully kind of Miss Esterbrook, but don't you think that we ought to have it harder?"

At this, Dr. Cadman and Edith laughed heartily.

"My dears, you'll have all the hardships you wish before you get through. Just take the sunshine while you can get it—and then, you know, I want you to tell us all about 'Mormonism,' and my friends, too. It will take almost a month to tell everyone that I introduce you to."

Dr. Cadman was not much surprised at Edith's offer. He was accustomed to having her do what her friends called "odd." Only a month ago, she housed three Salvation Army lassies for a week.

Betty's eyes shone with enthusiasm.

"Dear Sister Esterbrook," she said, "we *will* come and be so glad to. And if we can bring you the gospel, I know that you will be more than repaid for your kindness—our religion is the greatest thing in the world—the greatest joy that we could bring anyone!"

Edith gazed at the earnest girl before her, and then, rising, took both her hands lovingly,

"New York needs just such girls as you," she said kindly. "I see your religion is a vital one. Yes, I know

that we will be friends. Let Dr. Cadman take you home; get what things you need, and come back tonight."

Dr. Cadman looked on with a studious smile.

"I knew that you'd be a real friend, Edith, but hardly expected this." Then, more lightly he turned to the missionaries. "You don't realize just how lucky you are, girls, to have Edith Esterbrook as your hostess. Come, we'll carry the good news to President Gladder."

So Betty found herself driving home, with a still lighter heart, and happier thoughts.

Her mission! O, what a joy—no sacrifice as yet!

* * * * *

Chapter X.

"God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the wise." * * *

The month at the Esterbrook home was something to be remembered, by both young missionaries. In spare hours, Dr. Cadman would often call and take the two girls out for a drive, showing them the city in detail, and making it as interesting as possible.

Even Alma Lambert was persuaded by Edith to have the missionaries call, and Betty and Alma became great friends. Alma drank in, gladly, all the truths that Betty brought to her. She had never been religious, but now that the world had suddenly lost all its attractions for her, her thirsty soul was eager to be refreshed with thoughts that could make more bearable the loss of her husband, whom she loved more devotedly now than ever before.

Dr. Cadman encouraged her in listening to Betty, more for professional reasons—to take her mind off of herself and her sorrow; for, with a doctor's eye, he could see Alma was on the verge of melancholia.

Edith, too, was greatly interested in all that the girls had to say, but she was also interested in the preparations for her wedding, which was to take place shortly, and her attention was divided. She grew to care for the two girls with more than ordinary affection. Betty especially, wound herself around Edith's heart in a lasting friendship.

"I wonder why," said Edith thoughtfully, "I have known you only a short time, and yet I love you as though you had been near to me all your life."

"That seems clear to me," said Betty, happily. "We believe, in the pre-existent state, we loved our friends, and when we meet them here love takes up the broken thread."

"That is a beautiful thought and seems to explain it. Betty, I have asked our minister to have an interview with you girls. He didn't seem very anxious at first, but at last he graciously consented to talk to one of you. Would you like to tell him about 'Mormonism?' He is a Presbyterian, you know, and has had all kinds of 'anti-Mormon' lecturers preach in his church."

Betty's eyes shone with the enthusiasm of her mission.

"Indeed I would love to talk with him. When may I go?"

"He said tomorrow morning."

So, the next morning Betty went joyously to call upon Dr. McLeod of the——Presbyterian church.

As she entered the Parish house, she sensed the refinement and comfort of her surroundings. The two first rooms were large and well-furnished with green velvet furniture to match the heavy green velvet carpet and draperies.

From a large mahogany desk in the center of the room, a tall, slim young lady arose, and advanced to greet Betty.

"I have an appointment with Doctor McLeod," said Betty simply.

"Your card, please?"

Betty had forgotten her card.

"I haven't a card," replied Betty, suddenly feeling chilled at formalities. "My name is Miss Emmet—I'm a 'Mormon' missionary."

"O, I will tell Dr. McLeod," said the lady frigidly. And she left the room with a quiet and well trained dignity, that Betty thought matched the furniture.

She was ushered into Dr. McLeod's private study.

A tall, thin man, with a correspondingly thin face and deep-set, gray eyes, sat writing at his desk, which was littered with papers and books.

His high, intellectual forehead was surmounted by an abundance of iron-gray hair.

He looked up quickly, as Betty entered, and then eyed her from head to foot with amused surprise.

"So you are the 'Mormon' missionary," he said, pleasantly. "I'm glad to meet Miss Esterbrook's friend," he added, "Be seated, please."

"Yes," said Betty in calm, happy tones, "My friend says that you would like to hear something of 'Mormonism.'"

Dr. McLeod cleared his throat.

"Well, not exactly that, my dear young lady. What I know of it, doesn't make me feel very anxious to know any more. I thought, may be, I might show you the error of belonging to such a church, and make your life happier."

For a moment Betty was speechless. She had joyously expected a man eager to learn. She felt weak in the presence of this learned man. Her heart sent up a little silent prayer, and suddenly she felt a great calm strength.

"Dr. McLeod," she said kindly without hesitation; "no minister has anything better to give a 'Mormon' than what he, or she, possesses. The restored Gospel is the greatest glory in the world today. I have come to tell you about it."

Dr. McLead colored with annoyance.

"I presume, Miss Emmit, you are about nineteen or twenty?"

"Yes."

"And you come to teach a minister of thirty years' experience on religious matters?"

"No, Dr. McLeod," the girl replied humbly, "I can teach you nothing. You are far more learned than I ever hope to be. But prophecy tells us that in the latter days, God will teach the wise men of the world through the weak. God speaks to you through me. It is His own peculiar way—cannot you understand?"

Dr. McLeod smiled.

"You have a good tactful way of answering," he said tersely. "Where in the Bible do you find such a prophesy? Please show me."

Betty walked over to the big Bible on his desk and turned to I Cor. 1:27. In her clear young voice she read:

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the

world to confound the wise; and the weak to confound the strong."

"Well, I declare!" Mr. McLeod said more kindly. "You can hold your own, can't you? Where did you study theology?"

"Study theology?" asked Betty surprised.

"Yes,—what college do they send their missionaries to, before they come East?"

We study our Bible in Sunday school and church," said Betty, simply. "It seems when we get out here, the Lord tells us just what to say,—our little learning goes a great way."

Dr. McLeod eyed Betty with growing interest. He never expected a missionary in the form of a young, inexperienced girl.

"Are there many like you that come out?"

"Oh, yes," replied Betty brightly. "We are, as a rule, young ladies or young men. Have you never met a missionary before?"

"No, several times they have asked to see me, but I have told my secretary that I was too busy."

"And yet you have allowed other people to preach against us, and you didn't know us?"

The girl's tone was sadly reproachful as she looked at the preacher earnestly.

Dr. McLeod was annoyed with himself for feeling embarrassed before this slip of a girl.

"Well, yes, you see, these lecturers are very well-known and intelligent people. I have to rely on other brains sometimes. I'm a very busy man."

"They may be well-known and intelligent, Dr. McLeod, but they are very wicked people—for they don't tell the truth about us."

"Would you be willing to face one with that accusation?" asked Dr. McLeod thoughtfully.

"Yes, indeed, I would."

"Come then tomorrow at two, and hear an anti-'Mormon' lecture, by a woman, who has been among the 'Mormons,' and has preached in almost every Presbyterian church but mine. It is only fair that you should have a chance to talk, too. After she has finished speaking, you may have the platform for thirty minutes."

Betty's amazed delight found expression in a joyous, "O, thank you! How can I show my appreciation, Dr. McLeod?"

There was no doubting her sincerity and enthusiasm. The minister studied her expressive countenance with a kindly scrutiny.

"I think I understand the influence of you young missionaries. You influence more by what you feel, than by what you know. Emotionalism is a good hypnotist."

"O, but we do know our religion," returned Betty earnestly.

"Maybe,—we'll see tomorrow. I would like to prolong this interview, but I have an appointment. I shall listen and try to learn tomorrow," he said smilingly.

And Betty left him with joyous anticipations.

CHAPTER XI.

The Treachery of the World.

Betty and Dell, accompanied by Edith, were among the first to be at the anti-"Mormon" lecture in Dr. McLeod's church.

The minister greeted them kindly, being especially deferential to Edith who was evidently one of the most faithful members of his church.

Edith was very much attached to her church, and her minister, too. He had married her parents in this same church, and so Edith's religious life was first developed here, under the influence of Dr. McLeod, who was a spiritual man, and kindly in disposition. However, his pride in his position as a popular minister in the Presbyterian church, was his one weakness, which would bar him from sacrificing too much for truth.

"Well, Miss Emmet, I see you have come early to the fray," he said smilingly. "So this is your companion? Glad to meet you, Miss Siegler. Another young girl as missionary! Really, I don't see just how your church persuades you, young people, to leave home as you do. We couldn't get many from our church to do it, could we, Miss Edith?"

"I think not," acknowledged Edith. "The young people of today seem to be more indifferent to religion than those of any other age. I wonder why?"

"The temptations of the world, my dear," he said decidedly. "Come, sit right up front, and watch your audience enter," and he led the three girls to the front row, facing the platform.

Dell clasped Betty's hand.

"I'm awfully nervous, Betty. Aren't you?"

"Not in the least," returned Betty. "I'm just anxious to see this wicked woman."

Dr. McLeod had excused himself, and so the three girls silently watched the congregation assemble. It was composed of principally women and children. Now and then a man, or boy, entered, with an expression of indifferent curiosity, but the women seemed full of anticipation, as though a great treat was in store for them.

Betty observed them with a wondering sadness. Suddenly her eyes brightened and with an eager smile, she grasped Edith's hand. "Look! Look! Edith! Just look who's coming!"

"Who?" asked Edith surprised. Following Betty's gaze, she saw entering the other side of the church, a rather tall mannish looking woman.

"Why, it's Mrs. Catt! That dear Mrs. Catt that I told you about!" she exclaimed in a delighted whisper. "See! Dr. McLeod is taking her to the platform. May I go and speak with her?"

"Why, yes,—I suppose—" and before Edith could say more, Betty had started for the platform with enthusiasm quite oblivious to onlookers.

Mrs. Catt had just taken a seat besides the minister,

when she looked up to see Betty draw near, with both hands outstretched.

"O, Mrs. Catt! Is it really you! Don't you know me? Betty Emmet, of Ephraim, Utah? Betty, your little girl of eight years ago?"

Dr. McLeod looked on, amazed and interested. He saw the color rise to the temples of the worthy Mrs. Catt, and perceived the nervous twitching of her thin lips.

For a moment she regarded Betty coldly. Then with wonderful self-control, she smiled brightly as she took the girls hands in hers.

"Why, of course, I do! Betty Emmet! Well, well, how you have grown, and what are you doing in New York, Betty?"

"I'm on a mission for the Church. And you?"

Mrs. Catt looked at Dr. McLeod and smiled.

"Poor child! I suppose she must know the truth, Dr. McLeod," she said sweetly.

Dr. McLeod turned to Betty seriously.

"Mrs. Catt is our lecturer for the afternoon. If you will resume your seat, Miss Emmet, we will begin!"

Betty dropped the woman's hands and looked from one to the other blankly.

"I don't understand—you don't mean—"

"Mrs. Catt is to lecture now on 'Mormonism,'" said Dr. McLeod, a trifle impatiently.

Betty grasped the table with a tight clinch and faced Mrs. Catt with a face as white as death.

"You don't mean that you would talk against us?" she gasped.

Dr. McLeod hastily crossed the platform and took Betty's arm.

"Come, Miss Emmit, this is no time nor place for personalities. See! the congregation is wondering now. Don't abuse the privilege I am giving you."

And he led her to her seat beside Edith. Edith anxiously questioned her, but received only a silent shake of the head.

The meeting began, Betty stared fixedly at Mrs. Catt, who never once looked her way.

It seemed all like a horrible dream to poor Betty.

After singing a few good, old hymns, the audience settled down comfortably to listen to this wonderful lecturer, who was known to not only interest, by her wonderful morbid experience, but who had the genius to make whole audiences weep with her depiction of scenes in "Mormon" life.

Mrs. Webster Catt arose and then began her thirty minutes talk on "Conditions in Utah."

She depicted many evils in that awful Godless area of America, but, most of all, she dwelt on the awful depravity of the women and girls, and beseeched the women to send money to the missionaries to alleviate, if possible, their slavery and misery.

As Betty listened, her blood seemed to freeze. Dell noticed her eyes blazing indignation at the speaker, and she whispered, "Betty, didn't you expect it? I did. Don't get so fussed. Your turn will come."

But Dell didn't know the cyclone that was raging in Betty's heart. Here was her ideal Easterner, found at last a traitor to Ephraim and all she held dear!

Mrs. Catt proceeded boldly. She told of her trip to Ephraim, the sin that she had found there, and the awful conditions of the wives and mothers and daughters.

Betty could stand it no longer.

Rising from her seat, she approached the lecturer.

"How dare you tell these lies? My mother housed you and helped you—for what? To have you come East and lie about us. Shame! Shame on you! How can you be so wicked!"

There was a murmur of disapproval throughout the audience. A man arose importantly.

"As a member of this congregation, I would kindly ask that this girl leave the church. She has disturbed a public meeting!"

Dr. McLeod arose quietly.

"This is most unfortunate, Miss Emmit. You have embarrassed your friends, who would have been fair to you."

Edith quietly left her seat and approached Betty. Dell followed.

"Come," said Edith, lovingly putting her arm about Betty's trembling form, and leading her out before the astonished audience.

"Edith Esterbrook! What next will she do?" thought each one, with a feeling of tolerance or scorn, according to their like and dislike of this strange girl, so socially well-known.

"I think, Betty, you'll have to apologize to Dr. McLeod," said President Gladder kindly.

"But should I sit and hear my dear Ephraim spoken so vilely of, and never say a word?" asked Betty surprised.

"Dear girl, I understand just exactly how you felt. And what you did, was prompted by the best of feelings. But, my dear, you are too impulsive, you must hold your feelings in with a tight rein, and let them go at the right time. You broke into a public meeting. That is not right, you know. Suppose you had waited; can't you see the good that you might have done in your lecture afterwards? This newspaper article is infamous," and he pointed to the headlines—"The Boldness of a Trained 'Mormon' Missionary."

Betty flushed hotly, and tears of shame came to her eyes.

"Yes, it's more than mean," continued President Gladder. "It's cowardly. But the papers are waiting, eagerly, to find some chance to glare a 'Mormon's' mistake. We have to watch our step or—the Church is harmed."

"I'm sorry, President Gladder. I'll see Dr. McLeod this afternoon. May I go alone?"

"Yes. And, my dear girl, then forget it. You have done more good in your one month, than most girls do in six. Next week, I want you to go to Boston. Will you be ready?"

"Yes, President Gladder," said Betty with a great

lump in her throat. She mustn't let him see how hard it was for her to go.

So Betty left the mission home for the first time really unhappy. The affair of two days ago had upset her sensitive mind, and made it harder to part with those that she had grown fond of. Even old Mr. and Mrs. Esterbrook who had returned from a trip a few days ago, had won Betty's heart by their kindness. And then there was Dr. Cadman! More and more she anticipated his calls and his kindness. She grew daily more fond of this wonderful friend and she realized she was deeply in love with him in spite of her interest in her mission work.

"Perhaps it is best that I am going away," she thought sadly, as she neared Dr. McLeod's church. "I do want to do God's work with real zeal, and he certainly distracts my thoughts."

"Dr. McLeod received her kindly.

"I've come to apologize for disturbing your meeting," she said with embarrassment.

"I accept the apology," replied the minister smiling. "Sit down, won't you? I have just a few minutes. Please tell me about Mrs. Catt."

"O, Dr. McLeod, can't you please stop her awful preaching? She came to Utah and almost every town entertained her, and she was so delighted with everything. We all thought she was lovely,—except Sister Heller. She is an Indian, and she warned me,—but I only scolded her for her suspicions. Can't you do something, Dr. McLeod?"



"And, girlic," he said in parting, "send me some of your literature—I would like to know more about a Church that owns Betty Emmitt."

"The minister met her earnestness with a grave shake of the head.

"I would like to help you, my dear girl. I don't like unfairness, myself. I won't have her preach in my church again, but otherwise there is nothing I can do. Prejudice runs so high here, you know."

"But could not you defend the 'Mormons' in your pulpit, and expose Mrs. Catt?"

"How? I have no proof. I have never been to Utah. She has. I don't like the woman, and I like you. That is no material for an exposure, is it? All Christendom is against 'Mormonism.' I would only be disliked for my trouble."

So with great kindness Dr. McLeod bade goodbye to Betty and wished her happiness in Boston.

"And, girlie," he said in parting, "send me some of your literature. I would like to know a little more about a church that owns Betty Emmet!"

As Betty left the Parish House, her heart beat high once more. It was a wonderful joy to do missionary work after all. She would try to take a better spirit with her to Boston, and see how much she could accomplish.

* * * * *

"All you have told me sounds very reasonable, Betty, but somehow I have not the testimony you say I ought to have." Edith's violet eyes met Betty's questioning ones, with a puzzled expression. "It is just as though I had been listening to a beautiful fairy tale, and couldn't

find any fault with it, and yet"—here she paused, then added, "really, I can't explain myself."

"I think I understand," said Betty, eagerly. "Edith, down in your heart you know it is the truth, but it has not become part of you yet."

"Maybe that is it," said Edith doubtfully. "It seems as though I had been waiting for a church like yours, and yet something holds me back."

"Perhaps it is Mr. Hester's aversion to us that influences you," suggested Betty quietly.

"My dear girl, do not think Mr. Hester has an aversion to 'Mormonism,'" replied Edith blushing. "He isn't religious, and fears my joining anything new, because he knows how enthusiastically I go in for everything. But if you really knew him, you would know how very tolerant about everyone he is."

"Yes, I know he is," said Betty, "and doubtless the time will come when he will be interested too. You will write me regularly, won't you, Edith? It will be so hard to leave you."

"It will be hard for me to part with you, Betty. Of course I will write regularly. Can't you possibly come down for my wedding?"

"O, I wish I could! But I know I won't be allowed to leave the mission field. But how I shall think of you at that time!"

Edith took Betty in her arms, and, fondling her curls, kissed her again and again. Usually, Edith was undemonstrative.

"My little sunshine Betty, you really must come

back to New York soon. I know I shall long for you, when I'm really, truly married."

And so Betty, loved by all, left for Boston to labor in another field. Dr. Cadman was at the boat to see her off, and filled her arms with flowers and candy.

"Good luck to you, girlie," he said, fondly. "When Alma and Harold are baptized, I'll write you all about it. I expect that will be very soon."

During that day and the next, Betty seemed to feel his presence, though she had left him, waving her out of sight. His tender concern of her, seemed to enwrap her with a dreamy satisfaction, and determination to live up to the best that was in her.

CHAPTER XII.

Indifference begets indifference. Love begets Love.

Two months from the time that Edith announced her engagement, her marriage took place. It was an exceedingly quiet wedding, as Edith especially wished. George was invited, but much to Edith's disappointed, he sent his regrets.

Edith was radiantly happy. Howard never flagged in his absolute devotion to her, and her very slightest wish seemed anticipated.

Her parents, contemplating her exceptional joy, grew quite enthusiastic over the union, and life seemed full of sunshine.

On her return from their honeymoon, a beautiful country home awaited Mrs. Howard Hester.

There she spent three months, returning in the winter to a home still more attractive.

Edith spent the summer in a dream, extolling every act of Howard's with an exaggeration born of her own goodness. She also laid plans for a very busy winter, devoted to charitable work. To all, Howard smilingly acquiesced as usual.

His plans were of an entirely different nature. Outside of business hours, his time would be spent in the pursuit of pleasure. He mapped out the winter with keen delight, and Edith in turn smiled assent to all his wishes.

What could be more perfect than this ideal marriage,—each one ready to let the other live an individual life. Edith would prefer not to have so much gayety, but if Howard desired it, surely she ought to accompany him everywhere. He was always so considerate of her!

When Howard was occupied in business, she could do all the wonderful things that she had dreamed of.

Added to all this happiness, a greater happiness finally came to Edith. This was the knowledge that she was to become a mother. For several months she kept the secret to herself, planning a general surprise for her husband and parents.

Howard, she told first, and met with her first disappointment in married life. He was not pleased, as she had expected him to be; in fact he was quite the reverse.

"I wish Edith, it hadn't happened so soon," he said gravely; "It will tie us down fearfully, and after all the plans that I have made! It's really too bad!"

"But, Howard, just think of our having a wee little life sent to us to care for and love. It seems so beautiful to me. I cannot understand your not rejoicing."

"You are quite enough for me to care for and love, my dear," he replied, giving her a slight caress. "I can't help thinking that children are a nuisance, but it's no use worrying over what is done."

Seeing a shadow flitting over her face, he added quickly, "There Edith, don't you worry about it and spoil your pretty smiles. You shall not be tied down, never fear. I shall see that you are as free as the air, if you have a dozen children," he said laughing.

"I was not thinking about that, Howard," she replied quietly. "I would so love to care for the little one—my own baby!—It seems too good to be true! but I do wish you were as glad as I am over it!"

"Well, perhaps I shall be, if it is as pretty as its mother, and does not become the proverbial nuisance," he returned, smilingly dismissing the subject.

Edith's mind traveled back to a conversation with Betty.

"You know, Edith dear," Betty had said, "in Ephraim, everyone has a large family, and the parents love their children above everything else. It makes everyone, young and old, so happy and busy."

But Edith's disappointment found consolation in the unbounded joy of her parents. In their anticipation of having a grandchild, they promised all kinds of wonderful things for its reception into the world, and its journey through it. However, they were not destined to have their fond hopes realized.

Two months before the eagerly looked-for date, Mrs. Esterbrook became seriously ill. Their own family physician seemed unable to diagnose the case. Frankly admitting the fact, he called for a consultation, after which the doctor smilingly assured Edith and Mr. Esterbrook, that he hoped for a speedy recovery. In spite of his optimism, Mrs. Esterbrook became steadily worse. Specialist after specialist was called in, all pronouncing new ailments and agreeing to disagree. These were fearfully trying days to Edith, but she did not realize any real danger for her mother.

She was more concerned about her father, whose heart was hardly able to bear the worry of his wife's long illness and suffering.

Finally, Mrs. Esterbrook seemed to take a decided turn for the better.

Edith returned to her home to attend to necessary duties, which she had neglected during the month past. During that time, she had watched almost constantly by her mother's bedside.

It was a cold dreary day when Edith, fatigued with her day's work, sought her pillow for a short sleep.

"Just an hour," she said to herself, "and then I will dress and go to mother's."

But she could not rest. Evidently she was overtired. She lay upon her couch, gazing dreamily through the window at the heavy snow-drifts without. It was March. The wind blew the fluffy white specks in all directions, and made a cold, dreary scene. Edith's heart was strangely heavy. She ought to be joyous at her mother's change for the better, but somehow her heart held a chill forboding, and she began to weep softly. She felt very much alone today. Her husband had been away for one week—a combination of business and pleasure had taken him. He was compelled to go, but he might have returned two days sooner, if he had not accepted an invitation to a week-end."

Of course she could not go, but that was no reason why he should not.

Edith agreed to this. She was always with her mother anyway. She could not wish him to stay at home

for her, yet, today she wished he had—she was so lonely! “I never could have enjoyed it without Howard,” she thought restlessly.

“O, but men are different,” she assured herself. “I guess I am growing selfish. He will surely come tomorrow,—” and she aroused herself from her despondency and began to dress.

Near the completion of her toilet, the maid entered with a card.

She took it absently, then started when she read,—
Dr. Cadman.

“Wishes to see me?” she asked the maid, wonderingly.

“He didn’t ask to see you, madam, asked for Mr. Hester. When I said he was not at home, he took no notice of me, but stood gazing out of the window, just thinking like, so I thought I would bring the card to you.”

“Quite right. I will be down very soon,” returned Edith, putting the finishing touches to her toilet.

Experiencing a warm glow of welcome for her old friend, her spirits rose.

She hastened down and entered the parlor softly.

George stood with his back to her, looking gravely out of the window, watching the storm. He did not even hear her enter. The scene seemed to have the same fascination for him that it had for her a while ago.

“George,” she said gently.

He started from his reverie and turned.

Speechless he stood, with an expression never to be forgotten.

His full direct glance shot momentarily joy intermingled with passionate longing. Then he swept her with a look, filled with a great penetrating compassion. His strong features were softened by unfathomable sorrow, and Edith, not understanding, yet felt the influence of his soul strength.

At first came an exultant glow—a reaction from her lonely mood. Then came a sudden fear, in answer to his great over-powering sympathy.

“George, what has happened?” she exclaimed, feeling the surety of his expressive countenance.

His expression changed. He came to her, and taking her hand he said kindly:

“Edith, it is several months since I have seen you. It is such a pleasant surprise to do so now. I asked for Mr. Hester, and Mrs. Hester appears.”

She looked at him wonderingly. Could he change so in one minute?”

“George, you are evading my question. Do not keep me in suspense. What have you to tell me?” she asked earnestly.

“What makes you imagine that I have any news for you, Edith?” he gravely returned.

“I cannot tell, but I am sure that you have,” she answered.

“I came to speak with Mr. Hester,” he returned evasively.

"Howard will not be home until very late tonight, possibly not until tomorrow."

George received this news with a perplexed frown.

"I'm more than sorry to hear that. It should be him and not I—Well, it is no use denying it. I have news of a serious nature. Do you feel strong and brave enough to hear it from my lips, instead of Howard's?"

George was not aware of her condition, though he guessed it. But he saw no excuse for himself to escape this trying ordeal.

"Tell me," answered Edith, and he read in her eyes a new sadness, born of constant anxiety.

He took both her cold hands, and held them in his strong warm grasp.

"Dear little friend," he said with a deep tenderness, "I wish that I could do all your suffering for you. I only heard of your mother's illness today. I hastened to her home to inquire concernig her. The maid told me that she was very low. I saw your father and he asked me to come to you."

Edith paled, but her eyes shone brightly.

"You should not have delayed a moment in telling me, George," she said gravely. "I will hurry quickly."

"You look pale. Will you allow me to accompany you?"

"Thank you, yes," she replied, hastily leaving the room and returning dressed for the street.

"It's only a few minutes' walk. Your father will be glad to see you so soon."

"Dear father!" exclaimed Edith. "He is far from

well. I hope this relapse will be shorter than the last. I think mother bears these spells wonderfully well, don't you?"

He met her direct questioning glance, and he dared not meet it with an untruth. He must tell her now—there was no alternative.

"Would you not be glad when the time comes that will free your mother from these awful spells of agony? If she lives, she cannot be free."

"O, you do think there is doubt of her final recovery?" she asked fearfully.

"I do, indeed. How thankful we ought to be to have her at rest," he replied.

They were about to leave the house. She would need time to calm herself before going to her new scene of grief.

He drew her arm through his and gazed down into her face with a great fondness.

"Dear girl, be brave. You must meet the inevitable with all the resistance of your womanhood."

He waited for her to speak, but she was looking up at him in dumb despair.

His whole heart seemed conveyed in his next words.

"Edith, as I entered your old home, your mother passed to rest."

Edith stood quite still. Her words came in little gasps.

You—mean—that—mother—is—gone?"

"Yes," he said softly. But your father awaits you.

Be brave. We must hasten. He needs you more than ever now!"

She gave a smothered cry and tried to obey. But it was a futile effort.

With a heart-rending mute appeal, she leaned toward him.

He was eagerly ready. He caught her in his arms.

A deadly pallor overspread her sweet, fair face. Her eyes closed.

He looked down at her deathlike countenance, then gently carried her to the couch. "His in joy," he murmured, "and mine in sorrow."

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CHAPTER XIII.

Friendship's Claim.

"Harold, you are getting to be quite a little man. I'm afraid you'll be one before I get my plans made for you. How would you like to go away to that military academy that I spoke of?"

The boy's eyes flashed and he looked up at George Cadman with keenest delight.

With the exception of deep-set eyes like Will's, he was the exact minature of Alma.

The three: George, Alma and Harold—were sitting at the supper table in Alma's cozy dining-room.

Everything looked the same as when Will had left the home. It was true that Alma was left penniless, but it was comparatively easy for George to disguise the fact, and not until very lately did Alma learn that he was supporting the home with its accustomed luxury.

With the knowledge came a feeling of intense shame. She had been so thoughtless, leaving every business detail to George, and shutting herself up to her own grief.

The last few days had been full of troubled thought. How could she do anything at all to become independent, and yet bring Harold up in the right atmosphere? There seemed no answer to this at all. She never realized how perfectly helpless she was until now. Brought suddenly

face to face with real living, she found herself without a resource. She wept tears over it, but that did not solve the problem.

She had determined tonight to talk to him about it, and beg him to show her some way to help herself.

When George addressed Harold, she looked up in silent surprise. Just when she was about to carry out her resolves, he was proposing new obligations, which her boy was only too eager to accept.

"Dandy!" exclaimed Harold, with boyish enthusiasm. "You're a brick, cousin George. Ain't he Mus?"

Alma laughed confusedly. "If a brick means someone wonderfully good and kind, then he certainly is," she replied, looking smilingly from one to the other. "But what would poor Mus do with her dear boy away?"

"I'll write heaps of letters, and then you have Cousin George, you know," he returned confidently, "I'll never be a man, Mus, if I don't go into the world a bit," he added with the gravity of ten years.

George and Alma laughed.

"Well, my boy, a man we must make of you, so I guess we'll have to win Mus's consent, and persuade her to let me take good care of you."

Alma's blush made her look like her old self. Her pretty natural pink and white attractiveness had never returned since Will's death. More and more she dwelt upon his memory, and only her devotion to Harold kept her from absolute retreat.

Edith Esterbrook brought her great comfort, and the girl's choicest thoughts found fruitage in Alma's re-

ceptive nature. But nothing had stifled Alma's remorse and useless longing to live again her life with Will.

Supper over, Harold went to George and climbed up on his knee.

"Tell me all about the soldier place," he said coaxingly with wide expectant eyes.

George stroked the dark curly head, and for half an hour explained the life and doings of the academy.

Not once did he look toward Alma, who was regarding them intently. Restlessly she was thinking of similar evenings when Will had held their darling boy, and built all kinds of aircastles for his future career.

George grew animated, as he gazed into the boy's excited face. His strong affection for the child was reciprocated. Harold knew no time in his short life, when Cousin Walter was not a shining light to guide his boyish ambitions.

Finally the recital was over.

"Now boy, to bed; you have to sleep and grow, if you are going to be a soldier!"

Harold threw two little arms around George's neck.

"Yep!! I've got to sleep a whole lot to grow to be a big man. I want to be just like you."

George laughed.

"You must be an improvement on me, Harold. Every generation must strive to be a little better than the last."

Harold looked puzzled. He dropped his hands before him, and twisted his little fingers together in thought.

"What does generation mean?" he asked wonderingly.

"Generation? Well, let me see," replied George smiling down at him. "We all come into the world at a different time, you know. If two men are born at the same time, we say they belong to the same generation."

Harold sat earnestly thinking. Then he asked hesitatingly.

"Then do you and Mus belong to the same generation?"

He thought a moment again, then said vaguely, "But if you and Mus belong to just the same generation, you must belong to one another."

"Wonderful child logic!" exclaimed George laughing.

"He tries so hard to reason, but his conclusions are usually deplorable," remarked Alma, stretching out her hand to Harold with a smile of indulgence.

Harold jumped down from George's lap, and ran to his mother's arms, to receive the petting that he had not yet outgrown. So fond of his mother, he was almost effeminate in his caresses of her.

George smiled gently as he watched them.

When Alma and he were alone in the library, he asked earnestly, "Alma, can you think of anything that you would not do for Harold?"

"What a foolish question! Of course not," she replied, looking her surprise.

"I am doubtful of your willingness to do one thing," he said gravely.

"I tell you there is nothing," she said fervently. "He is all that I have now."

"Nothing? Absolutely nothing, Alma? Would you marry again,—someone who would gladly lay his fortune at your feet, and care for you and the child of his departed friend?"

Alma looked at him intently, and his meaning suddenly dawned upon her.

"Dear George," she said, and her voice trembled: "I believe that you would sacrifice anything for Will's sake. What a friend you have been!" she exclaimed gratefully.

"But you do not answer my question. Would you allow such a friend to have the only satisfaction in his life?"

She looked at him frankly, unabashed.

"No, George, I would not allow such a man as you to give his life for poor, broken-hearted me. Some other woman will surely give heart for heart, and awaken all the glorious love of your perfect manhood," she replied earnestly.

"Alma, it may surprise you to know that my heart is as broken a reed as yours. I have nothing to offer you, except what you can give in return—a lasting friendship. You have loved and lost, so have I. In the losing, you have learned to love the lost one more deeply than before. So have I. It is friendship for friendship, dear girl, and marriage vows for the world's good opinion and our dear Harold's future."

"You have loved and lost, George? You? Irrevocably lost,—are you sure?"

"Most irrevocably," he returned grimly. "Her marriage to another makes it even a forbidden hope."

"O, George, how strangely the world adjusts things! I have always dreamed of you being possessed with every earthly joy. You of all men deserve it!" she exclaimed.

"Then give me what is possible, Alma. To do for you and Harold would give me much joy in life, and help me to overcome a living death!" he said earnestly.

"You have suffered so, then?" she asked tenderly, placing her hand on his, affectionately.

"More than seems bearable at times. Will we help one another, Alma? For Harold's sake—will you?"

His fine eyes were eloquently persuasive. She met and seemed to lose what little resisting power she possessed.

"I will, George," she replied simply.

George leaned forward and reverently kissed her brow. Then he held her in his arms protectingly.

"What will Harold say?" said Alma, with a happy thought at the boy's delight.

"He will be satisfied that we belong to the same generation," replied George.

CHAPTER XIV.

A Contrast—The Husband and the Lover.

"Here is a letter for you, Edith. Shall I read it?" Howard asked his wife.

Pale and thin she lay outstretched on a couch near him.

"Yes, please," answered Edith.

Howard tore open the letter and read.

"Dear Sister Edith: I am transferred to New York, and will arrive there tomorrow. I can't tell you how glad I will be to be near you a few months. Your letters have been so welcome, but they are not like our good old talks and discussions. I'm hoping you will be a 'Mormon' yet. I will come to see you, directly I arrive.

"Always your loving friend,

BETTY EMMIT."

"That fanatical girl back again! I suppose now you're weak, she will influence you."

Edith's face flushed.

"Please give me the letter, Howard," she said gently, and he obeyed.

As he turned to his writing, he did not see Edith kiss the letter, and put it in her bosom.

"Dear, sweet girlie," she thought tenderly, "I certainly will love to have you now."

When Edith had fallen unconscious in George's arms, the curtain fell upon the first act of her young life—an act untouched by any real agony of living. But just before the curtain fell, the clouds had gathered ominously, and warned her of the storms to come. The blessedness of her unconscious state lasted a long time. For two weeks she hovered between life and death.

Howard, upon his return, was filled with horror. He was more than grateful that George had not left her side one moment of that first day, or night. He begged him to take the case.

George with an absorbing intensity, studied her slightest symptom. His was the passionate desire to save her life. He succeeded, but the shock had destroyed all hopes of motherhood.

The anxiety of Edith's illness, together with Mrs. Esterbrook's death, brought several spells of heart trouble on Mr. Esterbrook. One week from the time his wife was buried, he succumbed to heart failure, and was laid to rest.

George forbade the slightest mention of it to be made to Edith. As she slowly returned to consciousness, he wondered how to prepare her for the awful revelation of her bereavement.

When he spoke of it to Howard, he learned the weak nature of one who was Edith's ideal.

"Really, Cadman, I can't possibly tell her. You are a doctor, you know best how to do those things. Won't

you relieve me of this trying ordeal? I'm sure to make a blunder of it."

George concealed his surprise, and calmly acquiesced.

With all the power of his great strong sympathies, he made the telling of it as bearable as possible. He contrived also to have Alma near to soothe and comfort in her woman's way.

She was only too glad to give her heart's best to Edith. And Alma found herself constantly being lifted into realms of beauty and light, which she had never even dreamed of in her past selfish life.

All her old way of thinking was completely cast off,—the old garment was replaced by a new one of shining brightness.

Edith would never forget these two good friends. George's tactful sympathy carried her through her crisis. Alma's woman's heart wept with her, and so her triple loss was made less awful in its consequences.

However, with returning health, came a fearful melancholy which neither could alleviate.

Howard was ordinarily kind, but seemed to fear the slightest reference to her grief. He was away from home a great deal. Always he was punctiliously careful to leave her well provided for and not alone, but her illness seemed to irritate him, and she could see that, being any length of time at her couch made him uncomfortably restless. His coldness hurt her with a new constant pain.

George's watchful patience, and constant thought of her was a vivid contrast, and she found herself looking for his visits with an ever-increasing longing.

It was the subtlest working of heart upon heart, which finally chilled her love for Howard, and made his presence a source of constraint and embarrassment. Edith did not yet acknowledge to herself that her love was any the less. But as love generates love, so Howard's aloofness and indifference was surely generating its own kind in his wife's mind and heart.

"There is Cadman's auto," Howard remarked in a relieved tone, as he looked from the window and saluted George as he alighted. "We will get his opinion about it."

At the sound of George's name Edith's eyes brightened. She never allowed herself to think of the time when his professional calls would cease. She had a vague, unhappy fear that he would make no other calls.

As he entered the room, she tried to rise to greet him, but she sank back on her cushions.

George's eyes scanned her professionally.

"Not any better today? I expected decided improvement."

Going to the couch, he took her hand gently and held it up for inspection.

"A nice shadow of a hand, is it not, Mr. Hester?" he asked, smiling.

"A hand that was once plump and fair," replied Howard, trying to be jocular. "I'm just telling Edith she must go away and live in fresh air and sunshine. What say you?"

"Yes," replied Cadman grimly; "But she needs something more than fresh air and sunshine."

"She has but to ask, and it is hers," said Howard; his spirits rising at the possibility of an unpleasant situation being removed.

"That is a greater privilege than most possess," returned George quietly. Then he turned brightly to Edith.

"And what would our little patient like most?"

The violet eyes grew sadly thoughtful.

"I'm not sure that I desire anything, only to be left alone—to die or live, as God sees best. I would like to please Howard and go away,—but I couldn't—O! I couldn't bear the awful lonesomeness of a strange, big place!"

She spoke like a frightened child, and a quick sob was controlled with effort.

George's heart was beating wildly. He longed to take her in his arms to comfort her. He dared not show his excess of feeling.

Glancing at Howard, he saw an impatient frown darken his handsome features.

"Edith is so indifferent to her health. I don't see what we can do," remarked Howard coldly.

"Yes, I understand," Cadman replied evenly.

Then he turned to Edith again, and she read in his eyes the same wonderful expression that had thrilled her before. Never did he drop his gaze, and he looked untold sympathy.

"I understand. I have known just how this would be. You must go away, but you shall not be lonesome. I have your two best friends going with you."

"I don't understand," said Edith, with a show of interest.

"Of course not," he said, smiling. "Betty Emmitt arrived in New York yesterday and telephoned me. I called upon her, and found her,—not sick, but tired out. I think she needs a change. I then called on the Mission President—by the way, a fine man,—and proposed that Betty accompany you to the mountains for a week or two—mutual benefit affair! Then I've spoken to Alma, and she is going too. How about that?"

Edith's eyes brightened with pleasure and gratitude.

"It seems too good to be true," she said happily. "You are so thoughtful, George."

"You see, we professional men know the needs of our patients beforehand," George replied, smiling gravely, "You will go?"

"O, yes,—with Alma and Betty, and I'll try very hard to become well again quickly."

George arose hastily. It was hard enough for him to conceal his feeling ordinarily, but he could hardly stand the present situation.

"I am rushed today, so I cannot linger," he said. "There is nothing I can do for Mrs. Hester at present," he added turning to Howard. "Mrs. Lambert will call to-day, and make all arrangements. The sooner she goes, the better."

"Thank you, Cadman, thank you!" he exclaimed. "My mind is quite relieved."

"Of a burden you never carried!" thought Walter. To Edith he smiled reassuringly.

"We'll get you so strong, you'll never think of loneliness," he said with great gentleness.

When he was gone, Howard turned to Edith, all smiles.

"You don't mind if I leave you for a few hours,—Mrs. Lambert will soon come, and I have an important date."

"O, no," replied Edith, dreamily closing her eyes.

"Make any arrangements you like, and don't spare money, you know." He leaned over and lightly kissed her forehead. Then quickly he left the room.

Edith, alone with her thoughts, began to feel a twinge of her sensitive conscience.

"Howard is generous, and I wish I could show more appreciation. But I couldn't care for money—if he would only stay with me, sometimes."

Then her thoughts wandered to George.

"He always knows what I need, she murmured." He always knows and always gives."

CHAPTER XV.

Spirit Upon Spirit.

"I'm so glad that we did not choose a health resort!" exclaimed Alma standing up and feasting her eyes upon the rolling hills; green valleys, and chain of lakes.

"Yes, this is far better than contemplating other sufferers. I do hope that I will soon be well," returned Edith, who sat propped by pillows in an invalid's chair.

"Of course you will dear. This air would refresh anyone," Alma said, taking a deep breath with keen satisfaction. "You're not really ill now—just a poor little wilted flower that needs refreshing."

Edith smiled sadly.

"I hope that you are right. But somehow Alma, I feel as though everything was slipping away from me, and that my time has come to soon leave you all."

"Edith dear, you must not talk so. Such 'thoughts keep you from getting well," her friend replied, looking lovingly at her through a mist of tears.

Silently Edith gazed down the valley, and then giving a sigh as if to turn away from her own dreaming, she turned to Alma, smiling.

"Alma, we've been here just two days, and you have not told me your great secret. Now is the time to confide."

"That is just why I came to this place of seclusion

this afternoon. I am anxious to talk it out. I am not sure whether you will be pleased with me or not. Promise me—you won't scold?" she asked playfully.

"Scold you?" Edith said softly. "How could I?"

"Edith, I don't know if I ever told you that Will's death left me entirely penniless."

"Penniless, Alma? Why didn't you tell me long ago. You have not wanted for anything, have you?" she asked anxiously.

"I have wanted for nothing, dear. I did not know, myself, what state my money affairs were in. George said, when they found dear Will's coat, that some valuable papers were in it which meant provision for me and Harold. He told me to leave all money matters to him and not to worry. I was glad to be relieved, and never found out until two weeks ago, that George has supported us all this time.

Edith's eyes flashed appreciation.

"How noble he is!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, indeed! When I discovered the truth, I determined to take care of Harold and myself in the future. Other women have done it, and there must be some way. But when I was most troubled, George asked me—to marry him!"

She paused a moment and dropped her eyes abashed, —as if the thought was almost an accusation to herself.

It is well that she did not see Edith's quick flush, which receding, left her paler than ever.

"I never have dreamed of marrying again. It would be impossible to ever forget Will. I meant to be true to

Will's memory and live my life for Harold. But George's persuasion gained my consent. Do you think that it would be wrong to marry without the proverbial love?"

"Yes," answered Edith in low, eager voice. "How could you accept such a noble heart and give so little in return?"

"You are mistaken. George is giving me no more than what I am giving to him. Suppose his heart is buried in a lost affection, and I am really helping him, as he is helping me, to overcome a never forgotten agony of regret? He possesses almost the love of a father for Harold, and pleads the opportunity to care for him. Have I then done wrong?"

As she asked the question, she looked up at Edith, with a slight hesitancy.

Edith lay seemingly thoughtful with half-closed eyes. She was in reality trying to compose herself before replying.

"I think, under such circumstances you are doing right, especially by Harold," Edith at last replied, looking up, her eyes luminous with excitement. "Such a friend will be a perfect husband, Alma!" she exclaimed earnestly.

"Such a friend will be a perfect friend always, Edith," Alma returned firmly. "None shall ever take my dear Will's place. Walter understands that and is satisfied. You will think me a strange woman," she added.

"No, I think that I understand. You will always give the best that you can to George—I am sure of that."

"Yes. His goodness and his sorrow will a'ways

make me generous with him. He did not confide the name of his lost love, or the time of his loss, but whether it was ten years ago or one, he certainly suffers still!"

Again Edith's struggle for self-control left her weaker than ever.

Alma suddenly noticed her pallor.

"Why, dear girl, you're faint. O, I have talked so long, and forgotten your condition. Forgive me, dear," and hastily adjusting Edith's wrap, she began to wheel her chair toward the small boarding house, which was hidden in the clump of trees only a hundred feet away.

The little house held about fifty guests. It was situated on the lake front, and for quiet and beauty of surroundings, it was hardly surpassable.

Betty and Alma were ideal companions for Edith, but both were worried at her condition. They had been there for one week, and Edith grew weaker and weaker.

As Alma and Edith approached the house, Betty came out to meet them. She looked at Edith anxiously.

"Edith dear," she said gently; "won't you do me a great favor?"

"Anything I can, my Betty," replied Edith.

"Won't you let me have the elders come to administer to you?"

"O, do!" said Alma. She and Harold had been baptized, and she was now full of faith in the Gospel.

"But my faith in the elders is not strong," she objected.

"Never mind that. Will you?"

"Edith consented with a tired little smile.

So Betty sent for the elders. They came and administered to Edith. She immediately took a turn for the better.

After their departure, a young "Mormon" doctor, who had been studying in New York, came out to take a quiet vacation at the little boarding house. He was immediately interested in Edith, and followed up the good work of the elders by daily visiting with her, and talking about Gospel truths, in such a way that greatly interested Edith.

Betty and Alma were delighted, and watched their friend's rapid restoration to health with thankful hearts.

Alma wrote to Dr. Cadman:

"Dear George:—Edith has suddenly taken a turn for the better, since our elders have administered to her, and there is a Dr. Holt here —a 'Mormon'—who is interesting her greatly. When with him, she seems to forget everything but their conversation. When he leaves her, one would declare he had given her some magic tonic, instead of having talked to her for an hour. We meet every day, in a little summer house on the lake front. There Betty and I look on, enjoying it all." * * *

Edith's condition improved so rapidly, that after three weeks, the invalid's chair was dismissed, and she walked out alone.

Betty was then called back to her mission work.

Howard's letters were full of delight at Edith's recovery, and he wrote continually expressing his regret at his inability to visit her at Boonville. Some important

business kept him in New York, but he intended to spend a few days with her at the end of the month. He would then expect her entirely well, and her old lovely self.

Edith understood all his excuses. These letters were a bitter cup to her, but she drained it and looked for sympathy and help elsewhere. Religion had always been her greatest comfort, but Betty and Mr. Holt had been the first ones to give her the full realization of the absolute completeness of a life with God. Under Mr. Holt's guidance, she came to see all men as the "Children of God," and so she determined to look for the good in all. The pain from her husband's indifference became less. She dwelt more and more on the good qualities of Howard's character, and prayed for patience and love for him.

Since meeting Mr. Holt, her whole life seemed focused differently. Clear and straight seemed the path now, which before had seemed hazy and indefinable. It is true, his personal magnetism influenced her as strongly as his logic, but as it was the influence of goodness, she did not try to resist.

Borne upon the wings of spiritual thought, she soon overcame her earthly sorrows, and rested in the contemplation of the vastness of infinite, eternal things. The heretofore fixed realities of life became capable of change and progress, and the hitherto unreal mysterious realms of thought, assumed a vital reality that filled her with wondering delight.

At the end of the month, she was indeed her old healthy self.

Howard appeared at the time expected. When he

first met Edith, he was struck with the change in her. Never had he seen her so lovely, and he was puzzled at the transformation. A month in the hills could bring health to a convalescing invalid, but there was something more—an added sweetness and beauty which must have its origin in some cause unknown to him. Howard thought with irritation of Edith's letters. They had been full of friendship for a Mr. Holt—a "Mormon," too, and words had seemed inadequate to express her opinion of him. Frankly she wrote of her daily meetings with him and of his wonderful spiritual nature.

Howard, glad of being rid of the ugly prospect of an invalid wife on his hands, had read all these letters with a tolerant laugh.

"Spiritual fiddlesticks!" he said to himself. "How women do get carried away with this milk-sop sort of men!"

He had a distinct contempt for all religion, but he thought it a good fault to encourage it in women. It kept them in line and kept them more submissive. But "Mormonism" that was the limit of fanatacism!

But now that he saw Edith, and perceived the subtle change pervading her whole being, a keen suspicion shot through his mind, and the thought of meeting Mr. Holt became irritating. It was many hours before he met this chance acquaintance of his wife, and, meanwhile, he had ample time to mature his feelings which originated in the slighted doubt.

He and Edith were seated on the porch together,

when a stout, little piece of femininity appeared, and made it opportune for Edith to introduce her,

"Delighted to meet you, Mr. Hester! Indeed, it is time you came to look after your lovely wife! We won't say why!" she added with a knowing smile at Edith.

Edith blushed at the insinuation, but Howard answered smilingly, "Mrs. Hester is quite capable of looking after herself."

In spite of the smile, the lady felt the rebuke of his words, and soon left them.

"Really, Edith, you should be more careful in a place like this. A married woman, without her husband, cannot pick up chance acquaintances among gentlemen. If she does, she must expect gossip to get busy," he concluded with quick impatience.

The rebuke hurt, but Edith had determined to let no thought of herself intrude during Howard's short stay.

"There are always those who cannot appreciate the good intentions of a man like Mr. Holt. That lady is one of them," she said calmly.

Howard gave a low, cynical laugh, and keenly eyed his wife.

"A married lady is not supposed to appreciate any man's attention, good, bad, or indifferent."

Edith knew it was no good to reply, so she sat in embarrassed silence. She was glad when Alma soon joined them.

"Have just had a letter from George," said Alma joyously. Harold longs to see me, and George longs to see the miraculous change in his patient, so both are coming to Boonville next week."

"That is well," remarked Howard. "He can perhaps predict when Edith can return."

"I am ready now," she said quickly. "I am perfectly strong."

Alma turned to Howard.

"Really, Mr. Hester, Fate must have directed us here. Edith owes a great part of her recovery to Mr. Holt. If he were not such a Godly man, I would believe he had employed magic!"

A quick frown darkened Howard's countenance, and he puffed his cigar in short, jerky puffs. Alma did not realize how she had heaped coals upon fire.

When Edith and Howard were again alone, Mr. Holt appeared. When Edith introduced them, she noticed her husband was barely polite. He vouchsafed no pleasantries whatever, which was entirely contrary to his usual, jovial way of meeting strangers. Mr. Holt, seemingly, did not notice any coldness, and directed his conversation with his accustomed earnestness.

"Well, Mrs. Hester, I will be leaving Boonville tomorrow," he said finally.

Howard read disappointment in his wife's face.

"O, I am sorry to hear that," replied Edith, with more fervor than Howard thought necessary. "I—we will all miss you, more than you guess."

Mr. Holt regarded her with deep concern.

With no excuse whatever, Howard left them, and entered the sun parlor nearby.

Edith followed her husband's retreat with a gaze

full of troubled surprise. Mr. Holt quietly took Howard's seat, and said, kindly:

"We have grown very near together in all spiritual thought, have we not? Then, let us be frank in all truth between us. Your husband, Mrs. Hester, does not like me. No, do not gainsay the fact. I read his thoughts in his scrutiny of me. He misjudges the "Mormon," as most people do,—such is the way of the world's judgments!" He handed her a book. "Read this, and learn precious truth as I could scarcely give it."

"Thank you," she said earnestly, her embarrassment at her husband's show of feeling making her ashamed to say many words.

Her husband approached unnoticed.

"Edith, I would like you to return Mr. Holt's present."

Edith turned to meet the first real anger in her husband's eyes.

She arose, and drawing herself to her fullest height, she faced him in sudden indignation.

Mr. Holt arose also, and, looking from one to the other kindly, he said calmly:

"I regret this, believe me. Had I known—"

"Edith," interrupted Howard, with a slight rise in his voice, ignoring Holt's presence entirely, "will you please oblige me?"

Holt's steady gaze gradually drew Edith's eyes toward him. She read in their soulful depths, only tender entreaty to obey.

With a sudden flood of outraged dignity, she turned to Howard.

"For the first time I must refuse you," she said firmly. "This book is the gift of a noble friend. As such I shall prize it always."

She held out her hand to Mr. Holt, and he took it. Reverently bowing his head, he said quietly, "God bless you both."

Raising it again, he looked toward Howard. His face, angry and tense, was stubbornly averted. He looked toward Edith. She smiled at him gently.

"Goodbye, good friend," she said quietly.

"Goodbye," he said, with a world of sympathy in his voice.

Then he turned, and with slow thoughtful footsteps, walked down the path and was lost to sight.

CHAPTER XVI.

Away From the World, Soul meets Soul.

"I'm more than pleased with Edith's improvement," remarked George to Alma, as they sat upon the porch awaiting Harold's return from exploring the premises, and Edith's awakening from her daily siesta.

"But if you had seen her one week ago," returned Alma sadly, "And, since then, seen her fail daily, you would be as discouraged as I am."

George looked at Alma steadily. "What has made this change? There must be a cause, Alma; are you hiding anything from me?"

Alma dropped her eyes evasively. Should she tell George everything? After all, it was Edith's affairs. It savored of unfaithfulness to her to betray her confidence. But then Edith's health! George could do nothing for her, if he was deceived in any way. He ought to know what a selfish, suspicious husband she had. With the thought of Howard, Alma's face tingled. How he left at an hour's notice, without saying goodbye to Edith! He had lingered just long enough to see Mr. Holt go.

Suddenly Alma looked up to meet Walter's earnest gaze.

"George, let us go to some more private spot, and I will tell you what you ought to know."

"I ought to know everything," replied George grave-

ly, as they left the chairs. "Otherwise I am useless professionally."

They walked down the path until they reached the same little summerhouse where Edith had laid in her chair and listened to Alma's confidence.

Edith, from her window at the house, saw them through the trees and watched them enter. Then they were shut out from her view by the dense foliage.

She stifled a quick sob. Nervously she resumed her dressing. It was George's first day in Boonville. She could not rest, but sought solitude on that pretext. Now she must soon join them and act her part. Slowly she dressed, delaying the ordeal as long as possible. Her toilet at last completed, she seated herself near the open window and looked out upon the lovely lake view.

Her thoughts today had tortured her almost beyond endurance.

"Would that I could lose myself in it's depths," she said, wearily, and a great melancholy superseded her sterner mood.

"That is a wrong thought," she said to herself; "Mr. Holt would call it the result of the selfishness that makes for sin."

Her eyes wandered to the table near by where lay the chief cause of her distraction—the book—the one resented gift from a friend. As yet, she had not even unwrapped it. A peculiar feeling made her decide to leave it untouched until her husband's anger had passed. Howard had shown no signs of relenting. Not a word had he written since his return to New York. Her check was

sent as usual—that was all. Money! That was all he seemed to think that she needed! She tried to regard him kindly. She tried to be generous.

She failed. Mr. Holt had gone. His influence was withdrawn. In his place had come George—noble George, for whom her heart beat wildly. Yes, she acknowledged it to herself. Now that it was too late, she knew the error that she had made. When free, she had refused his love. Now that it was a sin to acknowledge his supremacy over her heart, she was forced to realize it most painfully.

Mr. Holt's goodness had temporarily lifted her above her sinful longings, even; he had brought her to a state of mind where she really desired to love Howard in the same old easy way that she had always cared for him.

But now her good angel had left her side—just at the time that she most needed him and his help, and the influx of passionate longing and regret for the unconquerable past was overpowering.

How weak she was! Had she fallen from all her highest ideas of right! She tried to pray, but her lips were as dumb as her heart.

Suddenly, she arose and straightened herself in stern resolve. Heart and mind were aroused in a desperate determination to overcome. She left her retirement and sought the porch, there to await the rest of the party.

Though she was not the girl of bloom that she had been on her husband's arrival, her health was assuredly regained in spite of Alma's anxious fears.

She espied Harold first, coming toward the house with an armful of branches.

"Just the kind that you can make dandy, white whips with," he informed Edith as he neared the porch. Coming up the steps, he threw the whole bunch down at her feet.

"That will be enough, I guess. Where's cousin George? He promised to make them for me."

Edith stroked his curly head gently.

"Your cousin is taking a walk with your mother. Come sit with me awhile."

Harold eyed her with boyish frankness.

"I'd rather get cousin. You can't make those, you know. I'll find them pretty quick, all right!"

Just as he turned to go, Edith espied George and Alma appearing to view.

"There they are, Harold!" she said brightly.

"Bully!" exclaimed Harold, and with eyes dancing with delight, he ran down the path to meet them.

George saw the boy coming. He held out his hand as usual, but his face remained set and stern. Alma was flushed and excited. Neither expressions did the child notice.

"Just going to hunt for you," he cried boyishly. "Lots of whips for you to make, Cousin George! Whole heap!"

Alma looked toward George, anxiously.

"Cousin George doesn't feel like being bothered, dear."

"Oh, but he promised!" the boy exclaimed, with a face suddenly full of miserable disappointment.

George forced a smile. "There, Harold, don't sulk! You know I don't like that. I'll make you a few now—a whole lot tomorrow."

"Thanks!" he cried boisterously, throwing his cap in the air, and then turning to run back to his precious find.

They were all soon seated in a circle, George busy whittling. Alma realized it was the last thing he wished to do. She had witnessed a display of feeling from him that she never guessed his calm nature capable of. "His friendship for Edith must indeed be very strong," she thought. She was sure he was placing his feelings under constraint at the present time. Perhaps he would like to be alone with Edith to study her, and judge for himself just how far her troubles were influencing her health.

"Harold," she exclaimed suddenly, "wouldn't you like Mus to show you some lovely deer?"

"Where?" asked Harold, quickly.

"O, Mus can show you," she answered, nodding her head mysteriously. "Cousin George can take Mrs. Hester out on the lake in the meantime. Then when we have seen the lovely deer, we'll follow them in another boat, and see if you can row as well as Cousin George."

"Whew!" returned Harold, with a low whistle, more expressive than words.

George looked up, gratefully to Alma.

"Would you like to go, Edith," he said quietly.

"Yes, indeed," replied Edith, with a thrill of genuine pleasure.

"Hurry, boy, away with the whips. Hide them safely, sir, until tomorrow."

Harold was only too ready to obey, and in ten minutes the little group was divided.

Silently, Edith walked by George's side, down to the lake. George noticed her embarrassment, and talked of the place and surroundings.

Once seated in the cushioned stern of the boat, Edith gave herself up to this pleasure with a dreamy joy, overcoming her lonely strivings. For a few minutes, only the light splash of the oars broke the silence.

When they had almost lost the house from view, George looked around upon the big expanse of water.

"This is your first outing on the lake?" he asked gently.

"Yes, my first. It is delightful," she replied softly.

"Then you cannot direct me which way to row," he asked.

"That little bend," she answered, nodding her head toward an outlet a hundred feet in advance, "leads to the next lake. There is a perfect chain of six lakes, six miles in all, and each as beautiful as this one, so they say."

"Not dangerous in a storm?" asked George, watching carefully a few approaching clouds.

"They say not, except in case of a wind storm. Then the lakes shut in by the hills, get the full force of the wind. That is a rare occasion, though."

Thus ordinary conversation put them more at ease.

On they conversed, and on they rowed, passed the first three lakes, disguising from one another the keen delight each one felt, at this drifting alone together through the calm stillness of nature.

Several times George stopped and listened for the sound of oars which would signify Alma's coming. But each time all was silent, and on they spun.

Edith was surprised at her own happiness. Was it nature's whispering or George's strong, manly presence, that made her feel so sure of herself, and subdued her restless spirit?"

Finally, the fourth lake was reached. Its shores were wild and lonely, unlike those of the other lakes. Not a bungalow could be seen. Here and there an opening appeared, where open camp had been kept. Otherwise it was a perfect wilderness of pine and brush.

"Would you like to land and rest awhile?" George asked. "The clouds have gathered slightly, but it promises no rain for several hours."

Edith gave consent and George made for one of the camp openings.

When they had alighted and fastened the boat to an old stump, of a tree George looked about the clearing.

"I have it!" he exclaimed, and, leaving Edith, he returned in a few moments with two logs.

Rather rustic, isn't it?" he said. "Best we can do, however. There! Sit on this, and rest yourself against the tree. Are you comfortable?"

"Very, thank you," she replied. "And you?"

"Shall do the same," he said, adjusting the log and

leaning against the tree opposite to hers, with a full sigh of satisfaction.

For a few moments he feasted his eyes upon her loveliness. The green forest and open camp made an odd setting for Edith's pale beauty.

There was nothing in his glance to embarrass Edith. Far too honorable to convey his feelings through even unspoken language, he simply gazed at her with open, friendly scrutiny.

She smiled back at him.

"Do you pronounce me well?" she asked.

"To all appearances—yes. After two weeks, you can return to New York any time you wish."

"After two weeks? Why not in a few days?"

"We want your good condition to be lasting. Mrs. Lambert tells me you looked better one week ago than you do now. Did you feel better then?"

It seemed unkind for George to ask her such a question. But he was determined to see for himself how deep a trouble was hers. His eyes regarded her intently. He noticed the sudden droop of the eye-lids to hide the shadow beneath them. Her lips quivered in spite of herself, and her hands toyed nervously with the lace of her dress.

A sudden rush of pity destroyed his own self-control. Leaning toward her, he laid one strong hand on her two small fair ones.

"Edith, look at me! Tell me—your old friend, little girl—what troubles you?"

Compelled, she raised her eyes to his. The violet in

them seemed deeper and darker with a great overpowering sadness. It expressed such melancholy depression, that George's whole being thrilled with the pain of it.

"Thank you for your sympathy George. If you are my friend, you will ask me nothing."

"You will not confide in me?" he pleaded, his whole heart's love unconsciously vibrating in his voice.

The touch of his hand and his compassionate voice filled her with an eagerness that frightened.

She longed to lay bare her heart,—to seek solace from this man who had awakened the only real love her heart had known. Why couldn't she have this consolation at least? He would never know that she loved him. She would always be true to Howard—George would despise her if she were not.

George's eyes were asking her to answer—asking her to confide in his great heart. She felt their power. She drank in their intense sympathy—then suddenly she grew deadly pale. She shrank away from him like a frightened child.

"Edith, what have I done? Speak! Surely you cannot fear me?" he asked gently.

Afraid of him? No! But she dared not tell him she feared her own poor, weak self.

"Don't, George, O, dont!" she said pitifully. "Ask me nothing. I am not strong, that is all. I ought not to have come. Let us get home quickly. Alma may become alarmed."

He drew away and contemplated her with surprise and concern.

"Poor child! Whatever troubles you, let it be your own sorrow then, dear girl. I never wished to worry you about it, Edith."

"O, I knew you did not," she replied miserably.

She arose, and for a moment, weakly leaned against the tree.

"Let me help you," he said gently.

She allowed him to assist her into the boat.

When he had rearranged her cushions, and seen that she was comfortably seated, he took the oars and started the boat quickly.

A feeling of intense shame kept her face averted. Neither spoke for some time.

The setting sun was entirely hid by heavy ominous clouds. Small ones were gathering from every direction.

"I hope we get ahead of this storm," remarked George anxiously. "These mountain lakes are so treacherous."

Suddenly, little ripples and currents appeared upon the glassy surface of the lake. They were about a quarter of a mile from the shore.

George stopped rowing and scanned the heavens intently.

"We must make for shelter until this is over," he said decisively. "See! There is an apology of a log cabin over there. It will protect us from the rain, anyway."

He quickly swung the boat about and headed for the small encampment.

A sudden squall caught the boat sideways.

Edith caught the rim of the boat to steady herself.

"Not a minute to lose," said George grimly.

Hardly had he spoken when a second squall struck the frail craft. With a suddenness almost incredible, the boat was lifted almost entirely out of the water and then with a heavy splash, it completely reversed.

So quickly had the wind accomplished its treachery, that Edith realized nothing until she felt herself rising to the surface of the water, while a strong arm grasped her own with an effort.

George kept her above water with one hand while he held on to one end of the boat with the other. The wind was blowing strong, but no rain had as yet fallen.

Edith felt little or no fear, and with almost a smile she asked George.

"Now what can we do?"

"You are not afraid?" he asked in doubtful surprise.

"Not with you," she answered quickly.

"Then we must swim ashore. Another squall and the boat may strike us," he said fearfully.

"I cannot swim," she said, for the first time feeling the fear of the dark water around them.

"No need. Hold on to my shoulder. Don't let go—not even if we go under a wave. I will bring you up safely again. You understand?"

"Yes," she obeyed, and with a strange feeling of perfect protection, she gave herself up to his guidance.

George struck out in a bold stroke. For a time he

swam with rapid progress. Then his stroke slackened and he made decided effort.

Edith had been watching the fast nearing shore. Now she watched his face. It was growing white and drawn. She gave a little scream and unconsciously tightened her hold. By a desperate effort George kept them above water.

"Relax your hold!" he shouted, hoarsely, and she could see the words wasted precious strength.

She tried to calm herself. Her heart beat wildly. Never once did she look from George's deathlike face.

On he swam, straining every nerve and muscle. At times his eyes almost closed.

Finally the shore was reached. Wading through the shallow water, he dragged Edith quickly to the dry beach.

"Safe!" he exclaimed. Then with a low cry of pain he staggered forward.

Edith caught him by the arm. With a strength born of the hour, she prevented him from falling to the ground. Quickly she sat beside him and lifted his head upon her lap.

"George, you are hurt," she cried fearfully.

"Yes, please loosen my vest. The boat struck me here," he said, touching his chest to denote the spot.

Carefully she uncovered the wound. Blood covered shirt and vest.

"O! George! George!" she sobbed piteously.

George struggled to a sitting position.

"Edith, don't waste time with me. It is my finish.

Go around to the point where you can be seen. They will surely come for us some time. Go! It is almost dark!"

She leaned over him, until her fair hair touched his own.

"Leave you now? Never!"

Her tone fascinated him and he looked at her with growing intensity in his now sunken eyes. Soul met soul in that long, hungry gaze.

Behind them the storm raged through the forest. Before them the waves beat wildly. The time and place completely separated them from the world.

Alone with death—and George.

The fearful past was entirely obliterated. The eternal future—what might it bring? Only the fleeting now was surely **hers!**

She watched his face becoming gray. His eyes still shone upon her.

"George," she murmured, putting both arms around his drooping head, "we shall die together."

His eyes closed, and she uttered a cry of misery.

"George! speak! speak! You must tell me once more you love me!"

His eyes opened upon her with a great joy.

"Edith, you—mean—that?"

"Yes! Yes!" she answered, and her gaze so intense, seemed to thrill him to life. He struggled to his feet. She arose to support him.

With sudden new strength he held her off.

"No! No! You are his—his by right. God help me!"

Edith leaned forward eagerly.

"George, I was his in life—now death unites us both! I love you, George! I love you!"

"God bless those dear words!" she heard him whisper.

Then with hands imploringly outstretched, he fell at her feet.

CHAPTER XVII.

Edith's Release.

"He will live," gravely pronounced the old Boonville doctor of forty years' good repute. "Only just in time," he added. "Fearful case of exhaustion and loss of blood. Needs careful nursing—very careful. Who can take care of him here?"

"O, I will take every care," exclaimed Alma, coming forward from the little circle surrounding the doctor for information.

"Well! Well! We need have no fear then," he said kindly.

"And poor Mrs. Hester?" asked one sympathetic on-looker.

"Wonderfully controlled, considering the shock. Almost too much control! I would be glad to see the tears come. A little hysterics now, a little spell of woman's weakness would be a good thing for her," he said, with a broad smile at the ladies. "Good-day, everyone, good-day," and the old man passed on to his carriage.

Many voices gave vent to satisfaction at the good doctor's report. The rest of the day little was talked of among the borders, but George's and Edith's narrow escape and rescue.

When found, Edith was lying unconscious beside George, who was taken up for dead. With the hope of

saving Edith, they had sought aid in the quickest possible manner, and immediate attention was given to both.

Alma, alternately by the side of George and Edith, scarcely knew the hours pass, until she stood with the group to await the doctor's verdict.

For the first time she breathed freely. She turned to little Harold, who stood near with round, wide eyes and parted lips.

"Be Mother's good boy, and take care of yourself, dear," she said gently, "Mus has her hands full now."

"You bet!" he returned with grave emphasis—and with this assurance, Alma sought Edith's room.

Entering, she stepped quietly to the bedside.

Edith lay motionless, her eyes wide open, staring fixedly at the ceiling. Two hectic spots burned in her cheeks. Slowly she turned her gaze toward Alma.

Not once in these long hours, had she asked for George. The doctor advised them to avoid any mention of his name. She was not delirious, but a little might make her so.

Alma took Edith's hand and stroked it gently.

"You will be all right again very soon, dear."

Edith smiled sadly. "No, Alma dear, I will not be well again. I have not long to live. Will you do something for me quickly?"

"O, Edith, don't talk that way?" exclaimed Alma, greatly distressed. "You know I would not deceive you. The doctor says you are doing wonderfully."

"Yes, Alma, but the doctor does not know all. I'm glad to die, dear,—and God will use me on the other side

for His great work." She paused in her weakness, and then continued, "Alma, don't lose one moment. I want Betty. Don't get me a nurse. I want Betty. I'm going soon, and Howard—send for him too."

"Edith dear," persisted Alma gently, "you're not going to leave us; do put that thought from you. But I'll have Betty here before night, and Howard too."

Edith did not reply, but closed her eyes, as if to sleep.

Alma telegraphed to Howard, who replied, that if it was not really serious, he could not come for two days on account of important business.

Betty, however, took the next train to Boonville, and arrived there about dark.

"Alma," she said, "I told President Gladder all about this sad affair, and he said I could stay to help you until both were better."

"O, I'm so thankful!" exclaimed Alma, relieved. "Edith has a wrong idea that she is going to die. You must talk it out of her directly."

Betty was pale but calm, when she approached Edith's bedside. For a moment she silently gazed at the sweet face on the pillow. The closed eyelids slowly opened, and Edith looked at her with a great fondness.

"So you've come, Betty dear? I knew you would."

Betty knelt down by the bed and, taking both hot hands in hers, she kissed them again and again.

"My Edith! dearest, of course I came! Now I'll stay with you until I've helped you get quite well. President Gladder said I could."

"He's kind, Betty, God will bless him. But, Betty, I'm not going to get well."

"Whatever has put such an idea into your head?" asked Betty smiling, and controlling herself with effort.

"God has told me so, Betty—in a wonderful vision. No, I'm not delirious dear—my mind is clear. I've only a little while to be with you dear. I want you to talk to me of the gospel; all the time that is left. I know it is true, now that it is too late to be baptized. Betty promise me, you'll be baptized for me when I'm gone?"

This was too much for Betty. The tears came as she looked into the eyes of this dying friend, who had done so much for her.

"O, dearest, I would promise to do anything, but you must try to get well. We need you—you must try!"

"I wouldn't be much use here," returned Edith, "but"—then her eyes shone with a sudden happy light—"I'm going to do a great work when I pass over. Listen—my vision was so plain. I was in a strange country—I saw hundreds of stricken people pass me by; they were captives in chains, and they were dragging along, with faces, Betty, those sad faces! They looked at me beseechingly, with sunken eyes that held such a haunted hopeless expression. I tried to speak to them, but could not. On, on they passed. Their number seemed endless. I felt stifled by their misery, and uttered a low cry. Then I looked up to see an angel standing by me. He pointed to the passing crowds. "You who have loved the destitute," he said, "do not be afraid to die. God has ordained you to preach the Gospel to these waiting



"Betty, promise me, you'll be baptized for me when I'm gone."

spirits—now hungry for the truth.’ That was all. The vision vanished, but it was enough. It wasn’t a dream. It was a message from God, Betty. Tell Alma it was a real vision.”

Betty felt that Edith spoke the truth. A sad certainty threatened to overcome her. Silently she prayed for strength.

Edith’s effort had exhausted her. Gently Betty stroked her head as she fell asleep.

Then she sought Alma and told her all.

“Alma, it is best to face the worst. Let us be brave. Perhaps it was a dream, but Edith is so sure. Let us pray for strength to accept whatever comes.”

Toward morning Edith grew weaker. The doctor came.

“Is she in danger?” asked Alma anxiously.

“A big change for the worse,” replied the doctor gravely. Keep her very quiet. I’ll come again about noon.”

Betty sent for the elders to come as soon as possible. But soon Edith feebly called Betty and Alma to her side.

“Betty, hold me up in your arms. Alma, come close. I can’t see very well.”

Betty held her gently, Edith’s fair head resting on her shoulder.

“Now, kiss me, Betty—and Alma,” said Edith with a happy smile.

As they kissed her, she murmured, “Goodbye, dear friends, goodbye.”

Then her lovely eyes lit up with an unearthly rapture. Her spirit was freeing itself of mortal frailty.

"Look! Mother! Father! Yes, I'm coming—coming—" and with a last faint gasp, she passed away, leaving Betty holding her lifeless body, in agony of grief, and Alma kneeling sobbing by their side.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Dream of the Past.

Time heals all wounds. It did so with Betty. Her great faith reconciled her to Edith's death, though the loss of her friendship was a keen sorrow for a long time.

George's marriage to Alma—this was a trial to Betty that threatened to culminate her mission. President Gladder was worried about her health.

"You seem very unwell, Betty," he said kindly. "Would you like to go home?"

But Betty pleaded not to be released. "I'll be better soon," she said, bravely. "I do love my mission, so it will help me."

So Betty stayed, and gave her whole heart to her mission work. It was not long before she was her old-bright, sunny self.

Fortunately George and Alma went on a prolonged trip to Europe. Betty's love for George was unchanged, but she, finally, found an unselfish joy in thinking of his happiness with Alma and Harold.

With this overcoming of self, Betty became a woman, and an added sweetness was hers. Everywhere her mission work was a great success. When her release came, which was just before George and Alma returned from Europe, President Gladder parted with her with deep regret.

"Betty, when you are gone, I shall miss a great power in the mission."

Betty flushed with pleasure.

"Whatever has been done, has been done through me, and not by me," she replied humbly.

* * * * *

It was a beautiful, clear day, when Alma, now Alma Cadman, entered her old home with George and Harold. The boy was in excellent spirits after seeing the wonderful world, and his constant, eager questions about what he had seen and heard, made the homecoming void of serious thought.

It was Alma's wish to keep the home untouched by any changes. George, quick to read her thoughts, knew that she lived much with Will's memory, and longed to keep the old surroundings.

George respected her devotion. It did not make her morbid, for Harold was her living joy, and in him she found her new thoughts and activities. Her fondness for George was as it always had been, and his companionship destroyed her loneliness, and she was able to smile and be happy once more.

Alma went eagerly from room to room, George and Harold following.

"Let the library be last," said George smiling.

"Why?" asked Alma surprised.

"My wedding present was to greet you on my return, was it not?"

"Just what I'm looking for," she replied laughing, though in reality not having thought of it until this moment.

"It is in the library," answered George quietly. "We will inspect all the house first."

"How clean it all looks! Who did you trust to keep it like this? I expected to find it all cob webs?"

"Betty begged me to leave the keys with her, so that she could see to it herself. It was her secret, you know."

"Dear Betty! Always doing something kind!" I must see her tomorrow, surely."

At last they reached the library.

"May I?" she asked, with her hand upon the door knob.

"Yes or no, would be the same to an inquisitive little woman," he answered, laughing down at her.

She opened the door and they entered. The light was just strong enough to show the room, cosy and inviting as they had left it.

Alma looked around wonderingly.

"I don't see it, she said, turning to George.

"O! Mus! Look! Look!" cried Harold, who had ran across the room, and stood staring up at the wall in open-mouthed wonder.

Alma turned. With a cry of painful joy, she stood transfixed.

Over the mantle of the fireplace, hung a life-size painting of Will Lambert. The massive gold frame was a brilliant setting for a perfect likeness, which looked

down upon them with the direct glance which gives a picture the semblance of life.

For a few moments she gazed into Will's fine dark eyes.

Harold, not removing his eyes from their new discovery, gradually edged up to his mother, and slipped his hand into hers.

"Mus, it's Daddy!" he said in an awed whisper. "Will he come back to us?"

Alma's arms encircled the boy and she pressed his curly head close to her without answering.

George came forward, and touched the boy's arm.

"Come, Harold. You know you promised to show Cousin George all your wonderful toys. I'm going to live here now."

"Always?" asked Harold eagerly, leaving his mother's arms.

"Always, if you are very good to me, sir!"

George took Harold's hand, and led him from the room. Gently closing the door, he left Alma alone with his gift to her.

Long she looked at her Will. Memories, tender, and suffused with a passionate regret, swept over her being.

"O Will! Will! Do you forgive me? But for my selfish, shallow life, you would be here now!"

His eyes seemed to smile soothingly, and she could not seem to take her gaze from him.

Then suddenly Alma thought of the giver of this gift.

How good and noble George was! She had not

even thought to thank him.

She was just about to leave the room, when a letter on the table attracted her attention.

"Betty's hand-writing!" she exclaimed in delight.

Opening it she read,

"Dear friends:—Welcome home again! May every happiness be yours!

"I'm so sorry I could not see you before going West. I have just been released from my mission. However, I am soon coming back to New York to study dramatic art, and hope then to see you.

"With love to you all, as ever,

"BETTY."

* * * * *

CHAPTER XIX.

Betty Finds Her Opposite.

Betty stayed in Ephraim only three weeks, and then returned to New York, to study. She determined to give all her spare time to the missionaries, and she was welcomed back joyously.

She made her home in a quiet little boarding-house, not far from the Mission Home. There were only a few boarders. Miss Allen and Miss May were two kindly women, unmarried and middle-aged. A Mr. Mellor was as mild as his name, and though a devout Catholic, he overlooked Betty's faith, and was her enthusiastic admirer.

Then there was a Mr. Edgeway, a young man with a blond attractiveness. Sometimes Betty was inclined to laugh at his mischievous moods, and at other times she would pity his shallow conceptions of life, and manner of living it.

This morning he had joined her before she had gone to school.

"And won't you even take in the Henrick Hudson Celebration?" asked his persuasive voice, while the eyes of the speaker looked at Betty with a laugh that defied too serious an answer.

Betty returned his glance with a smile.

"Mr. Edgeway, you seem determined to make me spend my time frivolously. Well, this once I shall surprise you. I shall be delighted to accept your invitation, for this should be an event of interest to every American."

"Spoken like an oracle!" exclaimed Edgeway with a careless laugh. "But, really, I am glad you will let me take you out, just once."

Betty regarded him with a queer little smile. She rather liked this man with his completely boyish manners. There was an undercurrent of serious thought in him, which she could not always follow, but she felt sure that most of his flippancy was assumed, to hide sterner feelings.

"You know I would love to go out with you many times, but I haven't the time," she said to him, kindly.

"Time! You have twenty-four hours in the day—the same as anyone. You mean you prefer to use your time differently?" he asked with a semicomical expression.

"Exactly!" she responded, laughing. "I would not be such a spendthrift with the hours as you!"

"All a matter of opinion. Methinks you are wasting the precious days of your youth, fussing over religion with people who can't possibly appreciate you, while here I am, languishing for attention!"

He regarded her in mock misery, as she fastened her coat.

"If they needed my attention as little as you do, I might not give them my time," she returned gravely.

"O, I would love to see you make some use of your life!"

"Well, I like that!" he exclaimed, and he opened the door for her to pass out. He was in the habit of accompanying her as far as their way lay together. "Here am I going to a hard day's work, and you talk to me about using my life," he added ruefully.

"Yes, but you work for the sole purpose of getting money to spend in the pursuit of pleasure."

"How horribly frank you are!" he said good-humouredly. "Well, do you know what might make me change into the most active 'Mormon?' "

"What?" she asked him, facing him in wondering interest.

"You!" he said, with a little shake of the head. "If you would just get interested in me, enough to go out with me now and then, to keep me from getting 'lonesome, oh, so lonesome,' I would devote all my time to investigating your Gospel."

Betty looked her delight. "O? I will indeed. Everything I will do to to help you!" she returned earnestly, and they parted with bright smiles of friendship.

"Queer girl!" he muttered to himself, grimly, as he left her. "Just thinks I am about to be reawakened," and he gave a little laugh of amusement. "I wonder if she will ever"—and then he drew out a cigar, and puffed seriously while he thought.

"Just as those little rings of smoke form perfectly to ascend to the heavens, and then vanish into nothingness, so my aspirations for your hand, fair lady!" And

he quickened his pace to suit his impatience at the flatness of things.

That same evening, at the supper table, all seemed in excellent spirits and talkative.

"What great weather!" exclaimed Frank Edgeway, with a deep sigh of satisfaction, as he started to eat of the bountiful repast spread before him.

"Do say something original," said Mr. Mellor, with his quiet little laugh. "I have remarked that fact at least ten times today."

"Worthy of repetition," returned Edgeway, brightly. "And now, good friends, I'm going to make you all fairly jump with surprise."

"What now?" mildly interrogated Miss May, fastening her sharp little gray eyes upon him, while the rest smiled without comment, so accustomed were they to his jokes.

"Miss Emmit has consented to let me escort her just once to the Hudson-Fulton Celebration. Just think of her indulging in such frivolity!"

All eyes turned to Betty with mild amusement.

"You will certainly pay for the pleasure, by being tormented by the giver," remarked Mr. Mellor. "And, ladies, since the spirit is in the air, you must promise to give me the pleasure," he added, turning with courtesy to the two other ladies.

"Bravo!" exclaimed Edgeway. "The true patriotic spirit stirreth the masses!"

During the next week, the celebration was the main topic of conversation at the table. The spirit of patriot-

ism pervaded the city. Betty's anticipation was full of delight.

New York suddenly awakened from its slumbering pride in its wonderful history of achievement. All classes, rich and poor, seemed enthused to the point of childish glee. The preparations were marvelous. Groups of men and women stopped to point to the million tiny bulbs, everywhere being prepared to make New York the gayest illuminated city of the world. Children chatted, as they went to school, each longing to be one of the favored to march in the great children's carnival, something long to be remembered as one of the gala days of their youth.

The days sped by rapidly, and the great festival opened with unprecedented enthusiasm.

"On the Sunday morning, Betty and Mr. Edgeway went to church.

Coming home, Betty asked him if he enjoyed it.

"Yes, 'indeed,'" he replied. "I'm thankful for a few hour's relief from Sunday's stupid monotony!"

"You have found Sunday stupid then?"

"Most abominably, I always do. Everyone parades the streets, stiff to the neck with Sunday clothes and faces to match, that look as though they were starched for the occasion. I always hated Sunday, from the day my mother put on my stiff collars and made me sit straight and solemn in the family pew for two hours!"

He was evidently in a dissatisfied mood.

"The impressions of your childhood were unfortunate," she said gravely. "Mine were so different. I sup-

pose it was no virtue in me to have loved Sunday, and looked for its coming. But today! Any church should be interesting, even to you. All are celebrating the event, and you could hear something attractive almost anywhere."

"Attractive! Yes, to those who live on the surface of things. What does all this hubbub and show mean after all? When the city is poor, and needs money to help those who are striving to keep above water, it calmly appropriates half a million for—what? A world-renowned pageant! The people can look on; yes, look with fascination upon the boastings of a city that grinds them down to the depths, those depths you and I know well. Then the churches hold festivals to applaud all this! I do not profess to be a Christian, but how you, with your spirit of one, can look upon this as you do, is beyond my understanding!"

Betty had met before this pessimistic spirit in Edgeway. There were few that knew its existence, but somehow, coming in contact with Betty's purity of thought, the smothered discontent of his own nature seemed ever rising to the surface to defy her criticism. At times, he wondered at himself cynically. With the world, he shrank from uncovering his real self, and hid his gloom with a gay mask. With her, he dropped it entirely, said what was uppermost in his mind, and though he longed for her good opinion, he laid his unattractive thoughts before her with careless defiance.

For a few moments Betty was lost in deep thought; then she turned to him with a bright smile.

"Such thoughts seem at first utterance to be true, and they sow discontent among many of our people. But they are first thoughts and not the deepest. We cannot lay too much stress upon true sentiment—especially public sentiment. This grand carnival carries with it a spirit of homage to peace and progress more enthusiastic and sincere than the great war pageantries of victory. Increase public sentiment, and we increase public good. True, the city might appropriate that half a million, and distribute it to the poor, but in a city of such great want, it would be of little account. It would soon be forgotten, and in a year would need to be repeated, to recall to mind that it had ever been given. But in this appropriation, the city has purchased a huge mass of public sentiment. It will be distributed to rich and poor alike, in fact, the whole world will feel the influence of this tribute to peace and industry. As all things of spirit, time increases instead of diminishing its good."

Betty paused in her earnestness, for him to answer.

"Don't stop, until you have exhausted your thoughts," he said.

"Do you remember," she continued, "the Bible story about the woman anointing Christ's feet with precious ointment, purchased with her entire wealth? There were those then, who asked if it would not have been better for her to have given her money to the poor. But our Master rebuked them, saying, 'The poor ye have always with you, but me, ye have not always.' The woman's wealth was a mere penury compared to the great

public influence spread abroad in every land by her tribute to sentiment."

"Completely out-argued!" exclaimed Edgeway, at once assuming his easy good-natured manners. "I shall never try to defend slothful public spirit again!"

That evening Betty walked with Mr. Edgeway, enjoying the illuminations. She preferred to walk, winding their way through crowded thoroughfares, watching the eager faces, and contemplating the panorama of varied characters with a keen appreciation of a great cosmopolitan city.

Their conversation consisted mostly of exclamations. But each enjoyed the scene too much to lose any passing effect by ordinary conversation.

It was eleven o'clock when they returned home.

A carriage stood outside the door.

"It looks like the doctor's," Betty remarked, as they ascended the steps of the house.

As they entered the door, they met Miss Allen and Miss May, excitedly running here and there.

"A boy hurt," they explained hurriedly. "Was knocked over in the crowd. Mr. Mellor and a Salvation man brought him here."

"Can I be of assistance?" asked Betty eagerly.

"I guess the doctor won't let any more about him at present. He's unconscious—in Mr. Mellors room." And so, the two women hurried back to the scene of disaster.

Betty had just entered her own room when a tap came at her door. It was Mr. Mellor.

"I have come to ask a great favor of you," he said. "The little chap I picked up hurt, is very low, and I thought you might sit with him, until his father and mother come. We are going to telephone to them now. Miss Allen and Miss May have both been kind, but the doctor won't have any excitable people around, and they act like a couple of flustered hens distrubed from their nest."

"O, yes indeed! I will come directly. How did you know where to telephone?" she asked as they left her room.

"That is the strange part of it," he answered. "I will tell you about it before you go to him. I was making my way through a crowded corner, when suddenly I felt myself thrown violently to the side. I escaped falling, by catching a post; but several around me were thrown to the ground. Among them was this boy, who was evidently separated from his folks. He fell face downward, and hit his temple against the sharp curbstone. A big fellow fell on top of him, nearly crushing him. There was a Salvation Army man trying to get through the jam, and he was pinned up against me. He and I extricated the youngster, then unconscious. He evidently knew the boy. He turned the ashiest kind of color, and almost fell over him. Then he controlled himself, and said he would hold him fast, if I could get an ambulance. We could not do this, so we carried him here, and sent for the nearest doctor. He says he has a broken limb and that the cut in his head is serious. The Salvationist won't move from his bedside, and eyes him with such absolute absorption and tenderness, that I know there is some hid-

den link in their lives. He said he knew his parents slightly, and would inform them."

"Strange," answered Betty, with ready sympathy, "Poor child, I hope he will live."

As they reached Mr. Mellor's door, the Army man came out. He met Betty's gaze with a far-away look of intense pre-occupation.

"You will surely send word directly?" asked Mellor.

"Assuredly," he answered, in a husky voice.

As he made his answer, Betty looked once more in the face of the stranger. Again their eyes met. A scarlet flush surmounted to his temples. He turned hastily and made a hurried exit.

Betty stood thoughtful.

"You know him?" asked Mellor, surprised.

"Yes, and no, his eyes are so perfectly familiar. I must have met him somewhere. I can't place him, though."

"Come, you are getting fanciful," said Mellor gently, and he led her to his room.

Upon the bed lay out-stretched the long slim figure of a boy of fourteen. His dark curly hair was a striking contrast to the white handsome face, so death-like in its unconscious state.

Betty approached the bed softly. One moment she looked at the still form. Her own face became deathly white. In consternation, Mellor took her arm.

"What is it?" he exclaimed.

Unheeding his question, she slipped to the side of the bed and sank to her knees.

"Harold! Harold!" she cried in sudden anguish.

Then her head bowed in prayer.

Reverently Mellor lowered his eyes, and stood awaiting her in silence.

Betty prayed with her whole heart and strength. Finally, Mellor left the room, and closed the door gently.

"Some great sorrow is hers," he said wondering.

At midnight, the bell rang sharply.

Edgeway, guessing it to be the parents of the boy, opened the door.

"I have come in response to a telephone saying my boy is hurt, and has refuge here," said the man who confronted him.

"I am glad you have come quickly. The doctor attending him will return any minute. He thinks the case is extremely serious. This way, please," and he led George up to the room where Harold lay.

"One moment," he said, as he reached the door.

Opening it carefully, he discovered Betty still at prayer. She did not even hear the opening of the door.

"Miss Emmet," he said softly, "the boy's father is here."

Betty started. Summoning all her strength of mind, she arose slowly, and stood by the bed.

"Come in," said Edgeway kindly.

Hurriedly George entered. Eagerly his eyes scanned the form upon the bed. He did not instantly perceive Betty. From the prostrate Harold, he glanced up at the woman standing near by.

"It can't be you, Betty!" he exclaimed, with his eyes thrilling her with their warm welcome.

"It is Betty," she returned gravely, her lips quivering with strong emotion. "O, George, forget my presence. Fetch Alma, it may be that Harold won't live. This is Mr. Edgeway," she added, suddenly realizing they were not alone.

The two men shook hands.

Then, leaning over Harold, George examined him carefully.

"He will live," pronounced George with a great sigh of relief. "It is serious, but I have handled many such cases with sure success. Betty, Alma was so upset when we lost Harold in the crowd, that I didn't tell her he was hurt. Simply reported the telephone message that he was found, and left her rejoicing."

Turning to Edgeway, he asked, "How long has he been unconscious?"

"Ever since Mr. Mellor picked him up."

"Ah! It was lucky then that Miss Emmitt knew him. How came you here Betty?"

"This is my home," she answered. "I have boarded here since my return from Ephraim. It was indeed a wonderful chance that brought Harold our way, though it was not through me, Mr. Mellor telephoned to you."

"No? Through whom, then?" he asked surprised.

"A Salvation Army man who helped to carry your boy home. He was quite overcome over the accident, and said he knew you slightly."

"Strange!" returned George, wonderingly. "It must be someone Mrs. Cadman has helped."

The doctor soon arrived, and while he and George consulted, Betty turned to Frank Edgeway who was sitting on the other side of the room, contemplating her seriously.

Surely this friend deserved some explanation of the mysterious happenings.

"Mr. Edgeway, this boy's mother is a very dear friend of mine. When a widow, she married Dr. Cadman. But he cares for her child as if it were his own.

Edgeway received this explanation with no comment. He had witnessed her meeting with George. He felt certain this man held control of Betty's feelings. With a reckless despair, he awaited the next move.

George re-entered the room.

"Betty, could you manage to stay with Harold while he is here?"

"You may be sure I will not leave his side," replied Betty, "and I will go with him tomorrow, and stay with Alma a few hours," she added impulsively, putting self-consideration aside.

"Thank you," said George, simply.

Edgeway escorted both doctors to the door.

With a hurried "goodbye," they left the house.

The doctor's auto stood outside.

"You will, of course, let me take you home?"

George was glad to accept, and he jumped in.

The doctor lingered a moment, to examine his tire.

As he did so, a man, coming forward out of the darkness, accosted him.

George leaned forward slightly, as he distinguished the Salvation Army uniform. His face was quite indistinctly seen.

"Will you kindly tell me if the boy is out of danger?" he asked in a low, eager voice—so low that George did not catch the words.

"I think so," the doctor answered. "I guess his father would like to thank you for your share in the rescue," he added, "nodding toward George. "There he is!"

One moment he looked toward George. Then, without a word, he turned hastily, and walked rapidly away.

Something in his familiar gait, made George tremble. With a sudden impulse, he jumped to the ground.

"You will excuse me, I must talk with him," he said quickly. "Thank you, just the same for your wish to accompany me home."

The doctor stared after George in surprise, then jumped into his auto, and started off.

The Army man had turned the corner, but George hurried on, possessed with a determination not to let him escape.

"Hunting a spectre!" he said to himself grimly. "I must be a fool, but—"

He turned the corner sharply, and looked ahead.

The object of his pursuit, thinking himself safe, had slackened his pace, and was not far ahead of him, walking slowly, with head bowed in thought.

Quickly, George came up to him.

"I would like to speak with you," he said, grasping him by the shoulder.

The man wheeled about suddenly.

As he did so, the street lamp shone full upon his face.

With a cry of horror, George let go his hold.

Almost fiercely the man grasped George's hands.

"I'm dead, George! You understand? I'm dead to the world! This miserable chance has brought my spirit across your path!"

* * * * *

CHAPTER XX.

The time we deem ourselves the strongest, we are often reminded of our weakness.

Before Edgeway retired for the night, he went back to see Betty.

Harold was beginning to stir restlessly, and she was leaning over him, stroking his hands lovingly.

"Miss Emmit, if you don't mind, I would like to keep watch with you tonight. There must be something I can do for you, and I hate the idea of leaving you up alone when you are so tired."

"O, I am used to this," she returned, smiling gravely. "I feel no fatigue whatever. Thank you for offering to stay."

"O, if you don't want me!" said Edgeway, in such a sudden bitterness, that Betty looked up in troubled surprise.

"I have not offended you?" she asked anxiously.

"You? O, no, only Fate! She has a knack of always boosting me out—therefore she displeases me! You understand?" he asked with a slight smile.

She nodded her head smiling.

"I think I do. You are just a trifle lonesome, aren't you? We will have a good heart to heart talk on Tuesday. I have not forgotten your promise to study "Mormonism."

"On condition, you know," he answered. the smile becoming genuine.

Edgeway went to his own room, with a restless spirit that promised little sleep.

"She understands?" he said to himself. "The deuce she does!"

On the broad arm of his chair lay a book. He took it up for inspection.

"Book of Mormon!" He fingered the leaves, half amused, half serious. Curiously he began to read.

"Simple trash! How can she be led away by such fancies," he thought cynically, after reading a few pages.

"But the language is pretty good," he admitted. However, he kept on reading. Gradually his interest was awakened. Then it became stronger and stronger. The night wore on, but still he sat, absorbed and wondering.

Meanwhile, Betty knelt in fervent prayer. Thus she spent the entire night.

At stated intervals, Betty gave Harold the medical aid that George had ordered.

Harold's restlessness soon ceased. By daybreak, he opened his eyes full upon Betty with clear gaze, as if awakening from a sweet sleep.

"How did you come here?" he asked Betty in surprise. "Where is Mus? Where am I?" he asked, looking around the room in wonder.

"Don't be alarmed, dear," she answered, taking his hand fondly. "You had a slight hurt, and were brought in here. Cousin George will take you home today. Mus is all right."

The boy was full of questions, all of which Betty answered soothingly. The sun was just peeping in his window, and the darkness of night had flown.

George came early in the morning. He expressed considerable surprise at Harold's condition.

The boy was so rejoiced at seeing him, he begged him to stay. But George pleaded urgent cases demanded his time.

"Where's Mus?" asked the boy disappointed.

"Mus is busy preparing things for your return home. She is quite worried about you."

"Poor Mus," said Harold, regretfully.

"Betty," said George in a professional tone, "you look tired. You must take a little rest yourself."

She looked up at him. His usual healthful countenance was drawn and haggard. Doubtless he had been greatly shocked with Harold.

"And you?" she returned anxiously. "I never saw you look so worn. Have you been up with a case all night?"

"Yes, a very serious one," he returned with a shadow of perplexity. He leaned over Harold fondly.

"Be a little man, sonny. I'll come for you this afternoon."

The boy nodded gravely, and Walter turned to Betty.

"Goodbye," he said.

His tone sounded cold and formal.

She crossed to the door with him, and was about to accompany him downstairs, when he turned to her and said:

"Don't trouble to come farther, thank you. Good-bye."

How unnatural he was! His manner cut her, and she stood silent, embarrassed with the fervor of her own feelings.

He glanced at her quickly.

"What is the matter?" he asked, almost sternly.

"You seem so changed, Dr. Cadman. Have I done wrong?"

"You—done—wrong?" he said, in the same hard tone. "No! But when a man wrestles with the hardest problem of his life,—One which tears at his very heart-strings in its solution, he must be stern or completely lose himself!"

He held out his hand to her and she took it.

A momentary thrill from his warm pressure,—then a great loneliness engulfed her heart, and she knew it was because he had left her presence.

"Will I never cease striving?" she asked herself fearfully, as she turned back to Harold.

That afternoon there was some commotion in the neighborhood, when an ambulance-coach drew up in front of the boarding-house, and Harold was carried out and placed in it.

Betty and Dr. Cadman accompanied him.

When they reached home, Alma awaited them.

"And Betty, my dear Betty,—this has brought you to us once more! You don't know how I have longed for you!" And the two women embraced fondly.

"And this gentleman who saved Harold—I must see

him soon," continued Alma, busily fussing about Harold.

Betty saw plainly that she was extremely nervous and hysterically joyous.

"Are you going to stay with us now?" asked Alma.

"I will stay a few hours," returned Betty, smiling.

"Only a few hours!" exclaimed Alma, disappointed.

"Yes, Alma, but I shall come often, until Harold is better."

When Edgeway called for Betty, she went down to him directly.

"Come into the library a moment," she said. "Dr. and Mrs. Cadman will be down very soon. I want you to meet them."

She led the way, and he followed her. Betty had not been in this room, since she had directed the men in the hanging of Will Lambert's picture, George's gift to his bride. With this thought, she unconsciously turned toward the portrait.

First she looked casually, then her gaze concentrated. She stopped abruptly in a remark to Edgeway.

"What has struck you?" he asked quickly. "You look as though—"

"Those eyes!" she exclaimed, excitedly clutching his arm,—then she stood speechless.

He turned and followed her gaze. Will's eyes looked at them both with a life-like expression.

"Why, Miss Emmet," exclaimed Edgeway in surprise. "That is the picture of the Salvation Army man!"

Betty made no reply. She stood staring at the portrait, too dazed to think.

George entered unobserved, and stood watching them keenly.

Finally Betty turned to Edgeway.

"You must be mistaken," she said in a voice little above a whisper. "That is Harold's father; he is dead."

"Then I've seen his ghost!" returned Edgeway, unpersuaded.

Betty's heart beat quickly. The longer she looked, the more certain she felt she had seen Will Lambert.

"How could it be?" she asked falteringly.

George came forward quickly.

"Betty!! Mr. Edgeway! Be careful! Say nothing before Mrs. Cadman. The shock would kill her now. What you surmise is true. Will Lambert lives!"

A fearful cry made them turn.

Rigid as a statue, white as death, they beheld Alma! Her lips moved, but she uttered no words. Her eyes gradually roved from their excited faces to the picture smiling on all.

For a moment her gaze was fixed and burning.

"Will!" she cried in a wild ecstasy.

Then she quivered piteously. As she fell, George caught her in his arms.

* * * * *

CHAPTER XXI.

The Efficacy of Faith.

That night George and Betty never left Alma's bedside. White and still she lay, and George's anxiety was great.

A trained nurse had already arrived for Harold, so he tried to persuade Betty to return home with Edgeway.

But she refused, and as she said "good-bye" to Edgeway, she said,

"You can understand how I am needed here tomorrow. I am sorry to break my engagement with you."

"O, that is of little account," he replied with genuine sympathy. "Perhaps Thursday you can go with me to witness the great military parade."

"We will see," she said with a grave smile. "I can think of nothing but her now."

And she returned to watch by Alma.

George observed her endurance with wonder.

The following morning there was no change in Alma.

"I fear the worst," he said to Betty, in a husky voice. "The shock was more than she could stand. I shall call a consultation."

Betty's eyes filled with tears, but she made no answer.

"Are you able to keep up?" he asked of her.

"O, yes, for anything I can do!" she replied earnestly.

"Then go to Harold for awhile, and try to make him

think lightly of this. The nurse says he is constantly asking for his mother."

Betty went to Harold, and stayed with him a long time.

Meanwhile the doctors consulted together in fearful earnestness.

When she finally heard them leave the house, she went softly to Alma's room.

George was leaning over Alma, gazing at her with a countenance so full of sorrowing, that Betty guessed the decision.

He looked up at her as she entered.

"We agree there is no hope," he said with that stern gravity she understood now.

"You can do nothing?" she asked quickly.

"Absolutely nothing. It is just a question of time. Her heart is very weak."

Betty approached him and laid one hand upon his arm pleadingly.

"O, Dr. Cadman," she said earnestly,—and he thought he had never seen her so radiantly beautiful before—"You can do nothing, you say,—but with God all things are possible!"

"Yes," he said, not fully understanding, "we must leave her to Him now. All human efforts are in vain."

"But did not Christ command us to heal the sick? If it were impossible, why would he tell us to do so?"

For a moment he looked at her curiously.

"You are pleading for your Mormon Elder's?" he asked gently.

"Yes. Cannot they come? Alma would wish it."

Her eyes, luminous with faith, thrilled him.

"I do not believe very firmly in that kind of healing, but I appreciate your enthusiasm."

"But will you give your permission?" she asked eagerly.

"Why not pray yourself?" he returned.

"Let us take God's way," she replied with sincere humility.

"As you wish, Betty," he returned tenderly.

"O, thank you," she said with a great joy,—and in her zeal to save Alma, she forgot her own struggles entirely.

* * * * *

George was alone in the library, pondering over the advisability of bringing Will to see Alma. It would complicate matters greatly, for Will to be seen at the house, and he might not even get to her in time to see her alive. But it was right to call him. He could not argue that fact away. He decided to go, himself, and bring Will as soon as possible.

Just at the moment of his decision, Betty entered.

"Dr. Cadman," she said with a great calm joy, "our dear Alma has awakened from her long sleep. She asks for you."

For a moment he looked at her incredulously. Then eagerly he took her hands.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed earnestly, and hastened to Alma.

As he approached her bed-side, the pale face on the pillow smiled up at him.

"Am I ill?" she asked, lifting a weak hand from the coverlet.

He took it and kissed it gently.

"Just a little," returned George soothingly, "Don't waste strength by talking, dear."

She looked at the elders standing by, regarding the scene with sympathy; then her gaze wandered to Betty.

"Dear Betty, always with us in trouble," she murmured.

Her brow contracted, and she tried to think.

Then she looked around with a bright smile.

"Ah! I remember now—the shock of Harold's accident upset me awfully, did it not? No wonder! But the dear boy is safe now."

She closed her eyes in weakness.

"Try to sleep dear," Walter said.

In silence they watched her sink into a quiet, restful slumber.

George carefully listened to her heart—then he walked towards the door and beckoned the others to follow.

When they were outside the room, he said to them:

"She remembers nothing of the cause of her prostration. I have had cases where they do not recall it for weeks. We must not allude to it in any manner. There certainly is great hope now. Her heart is stronger—

and no stimulants! Assuredly your prayers have been answered!"

"To God be the glory!" exclaimed one of the elders fervently.

George looked at his shining countenance with a puzzled admiration.

"And do you really believe, that had you two not administered to Mrs. Cadman, her condition would have remained unchanged?"

"That is not for me to say," he answered gravely.

"Well, to put it differently, how can your prayers change the course of nature?"

"It is not given to us to know God's methods," returned the elder promptly. "He is the creator of all—does he not, therefore, control his own? It is simply our part to obey. Christ's commands are simple, unquestionable. His is the power and the glory that we but reflect!"

From this man's speaking with the tone of authority, George turned to Betty. Her expressive countenance glowed with enthusiasm.

"Your arguments are good,—and your faith is enviable," said George, impressed.

The next few days Alma steadily improved. But Betty did not leave her until she was almost herself. By that time, Harold was wheeled into her room daily.

There they talked and read of the Hudson-Fulton celebration, and the hours passed quickly for the active boy.

It was Sunday when Betty at last returned home. Everyone of the little group greeted her warmly.

In her room, she found a beautiful bunch of American Beauties—the card attached was Edgeway's.

A knock at the door seemed to answer her thought,—for, with a pleasant "Come in," Edgeway entered.

"Is this evening mine?" he asked smiling.

"O yes! Will you take me out for a nice long walk? I would appreciate the fresh evening air immensely."

"And my company, too," he said laughing.

"Of course," she returned brightly.

After tea, at which time her friends were unusually lively and talkative, she left the house with Edgeway. She did not feel in harmony with the eager crowds and gay brilliancy of the illuminated city, but she felt anxious to please him, so she put all thoughts of George and Alma temporarily from her.

Edgeway was in one of his gayest moods.

"This is great!" he exclaimed as they started. "To really, really feel the realism of your presence!"

She looked up at him smiling. In these moods, he seemed to her, like a big, happy boy.

"I'm glad such a little makes you joyous," she returned.

"Such a little! Perhaps if you knew the immensity of my pleasure, you would not regard it so lightly," he said gaily.

It seemed to Betty, he could hardly contain his exuberance of spirits. Talking rapidly, remarking every detail of the illuminations and the crowd, he completely en-

grossed her attention, and she was surprised at her own enjoyment of the evening.

They returned about eleven o'clock, and not until they were nearing home, did Edgeway cease to be lively.

For several minutes he did not speak, and she looked up into his face, to discover a gloom gathering in his eyes.

"What troubles you?" she asked, kindly.

"All good things have an end," he returned with a sigh. "This evening seemed quite long when it began,—but it's gone already," he added crossly.

"What a spoiled boy you are," she said laughing, amused at his erratic moods. "There is always another beginning, you know. I will go again, and again, and again!"

"Will you?" he asked eagerly, and the sunny smile came back.

* * * * *

Monday morning, Betty resumed her regular school work. On her return in the evening, a special delivery awaited her.

She knew George's hand-writing, and opened it quickly.

"Dear Betty,

"I have determined suddenly to take Alma and Harold away for a change. Will start tomorrow morning early. We may be gone a long time, so try to call tonight. We wish to bid you 'good-bye.'

"Yours in haste,

"GEORGE."

With an odd mixture of feelings, Betty went to Alma's home.

She found her anxiously awaiting Betty.

"I was so afraid you might miss our letter, dear," she said. "I couldn't be happy in going, without saying 'Good-bye' to you."

"Are you going for long, then?" Betty asked, feeling a sudden lonesomeness coming over her.

"I don't know. The truth is, Betty, I am nearly strong, but I find myself so continually lost in a painful effort at thinking,—I'm trying to remember something—I don't know what,—but it worries me, until I almost cry with disappointment. George says it is my nerves, and if he does not take me away directly, he fears I will be ill again."

Betty took her hands lovingly.

"Perhaps it is best. Dr. Cadman always knows best," she said with a slight flush. "You must write to me often, dear, and let me know directly you return."

That night George took Betty home. When they reached the door, he said,

"I will not come in, for I have much to prepare for the trip."

"I hope it will benefit you all," returned Betty, suddenly realizing that their going was a new trial to her.

"I expect great things to happen before I see you again," he said earnestly, "It would not be honorable for me to even mention my plans, but"—he stopped abruptly, and held out his hand "Good-bye," he said, gravely.

"Good-bye," she said, trembling.

He held her hand for a moment; then, dropping it slowly, he reached over and rang the bell.

Quickly the door was opened by Edgeway.

George, raising his hat, walked rapidly away.

"I have been waiting for you," said Edgeway, smiling down at her.

She looked up at him with sudden pity.

"He seems always lonesome for me," she thought, "and now I am lonesome, too."

Then she said impulsively, "The rest of this week is yours."

"Thank you," he said warmly, and his eyes shone with a fervor that suddenly brought a question to her mind.

CHAPTER XXII.

To Save a Soul.

"Reaction follows all exceptional enthusiasm,—even be it of a religious nature. We may try to plead an exception in religion, but we deceive ourselves, if we do.

The time following a great spiritual effort, is the hardest to meet. If we conquer ourselves, we rise to loftier planes. If we fail, we are worse off than before the exaltation. There is a proverb, "Success is built on failure." True, but the reverse also holds good. "Failure is built upon success." The idea of one grand moment of conversion when the soul of man is roused to great things, never to become earthly again, is at best an idle dream. The ladder to perfection must be climbed slowly and with care. The rounds of that ladder are marked either "Success" or "Failure." Often our feet are resting surely upon the one, when we go to step higher, and we feel the painful contact with the other."

Betty laid down the tract which she had been reading, and arose from her chair with a deep sigh.

She had been resting a few moments, before dressing to go out with Edgeway.

George and Alma had been gone just five days, and in that time, she had come to realize that the past late experiences with George had not only re-awakened her love, but, if possible, made it stronger and more unconquerable.

She had kept her promise and had gone out every evening with Edgeway. He had been more than grateful, but she began to see that his attentions were more than friendly ones.

How dull she had been, to remain blind to the fact! She blamed herself greatly.

"Poor Edgeway!" she said, taking up one of his roses, and fastening it on her dress. "You are suffering for a hopeless love, and—I also. George is so fond of Alma—poor Alma—she needs all the love possible, if she remembers the cause of her shock. Probably George will make it appear to her like a dream. Will Lambert will vanish again, and she will never know the real tragedy of her life."

She began to dress her hair slowly.

"Perhaps," she thought on, "if I think of others, I will forget myself. I thought I had conquered selfishness, but it seems not."

That evening Edgeway was quiet, and possessed none of the animation of previous evenings.

They witnessed the grand display of fireworks with slightly aroused enthusiasm, but it subsided instantly when the excitement was over.

"Miss Emmit, this is the last night of the celebration we will enjoy together. Won't you favor me by prolonging it with a little supper?"

She acquiesced, and they were soon seated in a private room, as far apart from the world, in this big hotel, as if they were at the north pole.

The subdued, red glow of the candelabra, and the

distant strains of the orchestra, were restful after the glare and noise of the streets.

"I suppose," said Edgeway gravely, "that from now on, your mind will be only upon your art."

"I hope so," she returned earnestly. "I find myself strangely unbalanced in my thoughts, when I lose the thread of my life."

"Suppose there was one person, who needed to be saved from absolute uselessness, and you were the only one who could influence him. Would you try very hard?"

"What a question! Of course I would!" she returned earnestly.

"How much would you sacrifice for one soul?"

"Almost anything."

He looked into her fair, pure face, and his own flushed hotly.

"I believe you would," he said eagerly. "But I feel almost ashamed to acquaint you with such a one. You would sacrifice too much."

"Tell me of any one I can help," she returned. "I especially need to think of others, now."

At that moment the supper was served.

"Eat," said Edgeway, "I will talk of him later."

Edgeway ate little, but regarded Betty with a wistful despondency.

She felt his mood and tried to brighten him with light comments on the evening's display.

At last they finished, and Betty looked at him with a grave smile.

"You must not forget to tell me who needs me so much."

"Miss Emmet, it is none other than poor, unfortunate I."

Betty colored crimson. There was no mistaking his words, and the look that accompanied them.

"Yes," he continued, "without you, my life will be a useless hollow affair. With you, I believe it would be worth while. Your very presence exalts me to better things. O, could you,—could you stoop to poor insignificant me?"

His humility was genuine, and Betty beheld the absolute prostration of a man's heart at her feet.

She gazed at him with a look of great sorrow.

"Oh, have I led you to this?" she asked gently. "I shall never forgive myself to have let you so misunderstand me!" she exclaimed in sudden self blame.

"Misunderstand you?" he said, and there was a slight bitterness in his tone. "I would not dream that *you* could love *me*! I only ask permission to love *you*!" he declared passionately. "You—my salvation from life's pitiful 'Nothingness!'"

She regarded him with pity and surprise.

"You ask no love from me in return?" she asked tremulously.

"None!" he pleaded, "Perhaps some day my devotion may give it birth, but I shall expect nothing! Don't, don't refuse me, or—I'm a lost soul! I possess no strength in myself. I know it. I have lived to learn my cradle's curse. But I have the power of loving—poor

dog-like trait! You could strike me now, and I would still turn to lick your hand!"

His wild devotion made her tremble. Did she indeed hold this man's soul in her hands? Was he really weak and helpless without her? Perhaps God had sent him to her for her care to save.

She was confused, almost tortured with her thoughts

"Ask me no answer tonight," she said trembling. "I must think and—pray."

"You do not scorn me, then?" he asked with a great joy lighting his eyes.

"Scorn you? It will be my happiness to arouse you to a real sense of your worth!"

* * * * *

One month later, Betty announced her engagement to Frank Edgeway.

She had thought and prayed over it, and he had not ceased his persuasions. It did not seem quite natural to be contemplating marriage with another, when her heart's idol was surely George. But George belonged to another, and the hopelessness of her own love, gave her greater sympathy for Edgeway.

"Frank, sometimes I think you love me too much," said Betty, "are you sure that you will not be disappointed in my poor return?"

"Disappointed? O, if you only know what you have done for me. I thought it impossible to ever be really content. I hardly know myself. The world is a

very different affair with my Betty. My Betty!—How strangely beautiful those words sound! Just to repeat them over and over again gives me untold joy!”

She looked into his adoring eyes, and felt a certain delight in the thought of his satisfied longings. She smiled at him happily.

“To make one heart so perfectly transformed with happiness is indeed a privilege,” she said, running her hand through his abundance of hair with almost a maternal caress.

Another month passed happily, and Edgeway seemed indeed transformed. He needed no gay mask to cover his cynicism now—it had all entire vanished.

Suffused with the light from Betty’s radiant nature, he suddenly developed all his latent aspirations. They read and talked together, and he felt her spirit touch all things.

Sometimes he asked himself if this dream could possibly last. Would Betty be satisfied always? Then his complete happiness would chase away the doubt.

One night when she and Edgeway were alone together, the post brought a letter from Alma.

“Ah,” she said delighted, “I have wondered why she did not write?”

She opened it quickly and was surprised to find only a note.

“Dearest Betty:—George returns alone tomorrow. You may expect to see him very soon. He will tell you all—I dare not trust myself to write now. We are

all well and oh! So happy! My darling girl, my heart's best to you.

"Devotedly,

"ALMA."

Betty handed the letter to Edgeway in astonishment.

"Is that not a strange note? What could have happened?"

Edgeway read, and re-read thoughtfully. Then he handed it back saying,

"Something unusual, surely. Maybe Dr. Cadman has had their marriage annulled, and your friend is reunited with her first husband. That Dr. Cadman has brains enough to engineer a case like that successfully."

"You think it possible?" she asked in an awed voice.

He took her hands and pressed them hard.

"Does it concern you, if he did?" he asked quickly, his eyes compelling hers with sudden fear.

"I'm not sure that it would be best," she answered evasively, and he read in her eyes a shrinking from his scrutiny of her.

Turning the conversation, he talked of their future life together, but the light had died from his eyes, and Betty noticed the effort of all his remarks.

That night and the next day, she never ceased to think of Alma's note, and Frank's surmise.

"Yes, all things are possible of George. Perhaps even"—then she stifled the thought. A sudden misery

that seemed unbearable, demanded all her strength to overcome. She was bound in honor to Edgeway. How dared she even run her fancy so far!

In the evening she was dressing to go out again with Frank, when the maid announced Dr. Cadman.

Trembling, she grasped the chair. With effort she finished her toilet, almost too dazed to think. A vague fear possessed her.

"I am weak," she said hopelessly. "O God, give me strength!"

Her prayer was answered. She found herself descending to the parlor with an outward calm covering her inner pain.

Dr. Cadman stood awaiting her.

As she entered, he took her outstretched hand.

"A long time away, Betty," he said, holding it fast, "but a short time considering all that has been accomplished. Alma wished me to come and tell you everything."

"Yes?" she asked in a low tone. "You must tell me all about it. How is our dear Alma?"

She sat down as she spoke, and he drew a chair near to hers.

"Our Alma is well and ever so happy! Can you possibly realize it when I tell you she is re-united with Will!"

Betty caught her breath and looked at him fearfully.

"You are not glad for her?" he asked in surprise.

"Yes, but—" she could not say anymore, but gazed at him piteously.

"You are not glad, Betty?"

Neither saw Edgeway at the door. George's back was to him, and Edgeway saw Betty's eyes looking at George with infinite longing.

Edgeway turned, and slowly and thoughtfully went to his room.

"Yes, I am very glad," said Betty.

"You don't look it," he said gently. "Tell me girly, what troubles you?"

She smiled up at him bravely.

"I have good news, too, not bad. I'm engaged to be married."

"You? Why, who is the lucky man?"

"Mr. Edgeway."

"Well, my dear girl, I do wish you all the happiness in the world. You are sure you are happy, though?" he asked in deep concern.

Betty dropped her eyes in confusion.

At that moment, Mr. Mellor and the ladies entered the parlor, so Betty and George were no more alone. He did not stay long. As he said goodbye, he added, "Betty, you are hiding something from me. I must know what. I have to return to Chicago to arrange some details. When I come back, I shall call again."

And so he left her, standing pale, but determined—determined to be true to Edgeway and save a soul.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"'Tis better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all."

"Has Mr. Edgeway gone away for long?" asked Mr. Mellor of Betty.

"He did not say for how long," returned Betty. "He said he was called away very suddenly, and would write me as soon as he reached his destination, and tell me particulars. I am expecting a letter tonight surely—it is two days now since he went."

Betty's mind dwelt little with Frank. She wondered slightly what could have called him away, but she was rather relieved at his absence. Her thoughts of George were so intense, and her conflicting emotions so difficult to contend with, that she feared she might betray her secret to Frank, who seemed ever watching her every word and look. Sometimes she almost believed he held some suspicion of her trial. She was determined to be true to him, and make him the man he was capable of becoming.

Her sacrifice was great, and as yet, the days were too young, for her to feel much joy in her resolve. She seemed groping in the dark, sure that the course she had taken was right, but seeing no light ahead. But she knew that the day would come, when she would enjoy the happiness of right doing.

When Frank had said goodbye, he had been unusually calm and gentle. His wild love for her seemed subdued. She felt its power, more than that of his usual passionate adoration. His last words came to her with sudden force:

"Betty, you have taught me how to live. What greater thing could a man ask from the woman he loves?"

A letter awaited her as she surmised. When she went to her room, with a new interest she turned to the letter before dressing for supper.

"I must be more interested in you, dear boy," she thought rather regretfully, "I hope I can learn to give you more and more."

She opened and read:

"My own beautiful good one:—This is the last time I may write 'My Own.' Yes, dearest Betty, you are too beautiful and good to be sacrificed upon the altar of one man's selfishness!"

"From this day I shall glory in your freedom. Yes, poor, selfish me has suddenly found out the joy of forgetting self,—a strange, new joy, emanating from your own lovely self!

"At first I was mad with the joy of loving you. But the mad joy wore itself out. Then I beheld my loved one, fair and pure, dragging through life a bleeding heart!

"The vision never left me, night or day. It tortured me and I knew no rest, even in your sweet presence.

"Then, the fire of a greater love kindled in my heart. I desired to see you glowing with perfect happiness. This desire grew stronger and stronger until it evolved a way

by which it could be satisfied. That way has been accomplished. I am far, far away from the dearest girl on God's fair earth. She will never see me again, but the vision of her shall be the inspiration of my life!

"Soon you will forget the man to whom you have given new life and strength to bear all things.

"YOUR FRANK."

Betty laid the letter down with a sense of relief at her release. Then a sudden pity for Frank brought a mist to her eyes. But she seemed to hear him say again,

"You have taught me how to live—what more could a man ask from the woman he loves?"

The words comforted her, she had not harmed him, then.

"God keep him strong and good!" she said fervently.

Slowly and thoughtfully she dressed. Then she noticed another letter which she had not seen before. It was from Ephraim. With great anxiety she read, that her mother was very ill, and she must come home directly.

So Betty's mind instantly planned for her sudden departure for the West and once more, her own trials were forgotten in thinking of others.

* * * * *

CHAPTER XXIV.

Unalloyed Love.

In a small, modest apartment in a section of Chicago, which is inexpensive but respectable, Alma began her new life with Will and Harold.

This afternoon she was alone for the first time. Will had taken Harold out to see more of the great city, while she was busy preparing for George's return from New York.

He had left them just two weeks ago, promising to return and visit them for a few days.

Alma prepared supper with a happy heart. She had refused all persuasions to keep a maid. Her strength had returned, and she was so supremely happy that no work seemed an effort to her, and she gloried now in taking a really active part in the world and helping Will to rise again from the lower rounds of the ladder.

It was nearing six o'clock, and Alma looked the daintily set table over, with a glow of pride and satisfaction.

"I never thought it could be such a pleasure for a woman to prepare things herself. It's almost like playing house." She laughed softly. "Riches after all, are not everything."

She went to the window, and drew aside the curtain to look out. There was no sign of her loved ones yet. They were going to meet George. Maybe the train was late. So she sat down to wait. But she did not rest long. It seemed impossible for her not to keep busy with some preparation.

Could this be Alma? Pleasure-loving, indolent Alma of the past? No! This was the Alma of later years,—strong, eager, loving, beginning a new life upon the ashes of heart-aches past!

It was long past six, when Harold and Will returned alone. George had not arrived on the train expected.

"Never mind," said Alma, "We three will have our cozy little supper together. When George comes, I can prepare something, too."

Will's arms encircled her as they went to the table. Fondly he looked down into Alma's happy face.

"I can't get used to this wonderful life," he said gently.

"Nor I," she replied with an answering smile. "I sometimes pinch myself to wake up."

Will's face was somewhat lined and he was partly gray. Otherwise, he was the same Will with the kind, dark, deep-set eyes.

Harold ate his supper hurriedly.

"I'm going to the depot, again, to meet Cousin George," he explained.

"Very well," said Alma, but don't stay too late."

With a boy's caress for both parents he was gone.

Alma and Will together cleared away the supper.

When they had finished, they retired to the sitting-room. Will seated himself in a big arm-chair, and gently pulled Alma down upon his knee, in the same old, loving manner.

She nestled up to him, and, resting her head upon his breast, she looked up into his face in quiet rapture.

His eyes looked down at her with the gaze of a hungry soul, not yet satisfied.

"I cannot bear to be away from you one hour, dearest," he said. "I am always fearing something will snatch you from my arms again. We are not out of the woods yet."

"How foolish, Will," she said, smiling brightly, "You must trust George. He can do anything, you know."

"George! What a friend! I wonder you did not completely forget your Will, when by his side!"

She sighed gently at the thought of those days.

"Ah, Will! There was never a day, when I did not go alone to the library, to sit before your picture, and gaze into your loving eyes. George is great and good, but Will is the one love of my life!"

She pressed her soft cheek against his, and thus they sat, too filled with ecstasy to speak.

Suddenly his eyes became troubled, and a mist gathered in them.

"Dearest, how can you ever forgive me for causing you so much suffering?" he asked brokenly.

"How can you ever forgive me?" she replied.

"Sh! You must not say that!" he returned, sealing her lips with a kiss.

Just then Harold's quick ring of the bell was heard.

"George, too, or he would not be so soon back," exclaimed Will.

She arose, and opening the door, hand in hand they waited for George and Harold to ascend the stairs.

"I've got him," said Harold delightedly, as Will

and Alma each grasped the hand that George extended to them.

"O, George, we were so afraid something might keep you away," said Alma, and as they ushered him in, she slipped away to the little kitchen, where the kettle seemed always to sing to her, "Home, sweet home."

Quickly she poured a cup of chocolate, and setting it on a dainty tray, she placed with it the cream, sugar and muffins, temptingly. This she took in to George.

He took it and looked from one to the other with a bright sympathy.

"I made these muffins myself," said Alma, laughing.

"Yes, and you ought to have seen Mus," said Harold, "She read the cook book about a dozen times, and then made three tins of muffins before they came out fluffy like. They're bully, though!"

When the tray was taken away, and Alma once more rejoined them, George said happily,

"I have only good news for you all. Everything is settled satisfactorily. Will, nothing will ever be brought up against you in any way. The bank officials sent their good wishes, and hope for your future success. I've also got a letter of introduction for you to present to a big firm here, which promises to give you a fair start in this city, where your name can be made anew."

He drew the letter from his pocket and handed it to Will.

Taking it, Will grasped George's hand in silence. He was too overcome for words.

Alma's eyes filled with happy tears.

"O, I knew you could do anything!" she exclaimed gratefully.

Harold looked on with a big lump gathering in his throat. With an effort he cleared it away; then he went over to George with a glowing face. Laying one hand on his shoulder, he said with boyish fervor,

"You always were a brick, Cousin George!"

He turned to the boy and looked at him with a shade of regret, "You won't forget me, little man?" he asked tenderly.

"Forget you?" returned the boy, "Never!" And taking one hand of Will's and one of George's he looked frankly from one to the other.

"It's 'nick and tuck' between you and father!" he declared earnestly.

Both men looked at each other understandingly.

"It must always be so, Harold," said Will gravely.

Later in the evening, when Harold had retired, Alma asked:

"Did you find Betty well and happy?"

"Yes, and she is engaged to Mr. Edgeway."

"I'm not surprised," answered Alma. "I do hope that he is good enough for her."

"He seems a good sort," answered George thoughtfully, "But I think Betty could have done better. She is an exceptionally fine little woman. By the way, are there any letters for me here? I gave this for my address.

"Yes, one—and it looks like Betty's handwriting, but I am not sure."

George opened it and read aloud.

"Dear Dr. Cadman:—You will be very much sur-

prised to know that I am going to Ephraim. Mother is very ill, and has sent for me. If I did not have to hasten home, I would stop over in Chicago to say goodbye to Alma and you, but I cannot see you until I return to New York to complete my studies—which may not be for a long time.

"My engagement to Mr. Edgeway has been broken.

"Give my love to Alma and Harold. I hope to hear from you all.

"Praying that God will bless each one of you,

"I am, your Ephraim friend,

"BETTY EMMIT."

"A short lived engagement!" exclaimed Alma.

"I am not sorry," returned George. "I felt worried over her. She didn't seem happy."

There was a moment's silence, then Alma said kindly,

"George, you don't look well. What are you going to do now?"

"I'm only tired out, Alma. I think that I will take a trip to somewhere for a good rest—away from New York and excitement for a time. I almost feel like making a hermit of myself for a while."

"Why not visit Ephraim?" asked Alma, "The change of climate and quiet would do you good, and you couldn't be lonesome with Betty there."

"That's a first class idea, Alma, I'll surprise Betty. I think her company would be a splendid antidote for my unsettled mood. At all times, she's a comfort, isn't she?"

Alma looked at him keenly.

"George, did it ever occur to you how fond you are of Betty?"

"Why, of course," he replied promptly, "I've always loved the child, since I first met her, a small, eager youngster, ready to do big things."

"But she is not a child now, George, she is a woman, and—free."

George looked his surprise, then laughed.

"Why, Alma, are you trying to marry me off already? How Betty would laugh!" Then he became serious. "You know Edith was my love, and always will be."

"Yes, George, but you can be true to Edith, and yet love another!

"Is that a 'Mormon' idea?" he asked with a grave smile. "I never could forget Edith, so you see I'm doomed to be a bachelor. However, Ephraim is just the place for me now, and I'll come back in a month, my old self."

* * * * *

It was a beautiful clear autumn day! One must visit the Rocky Mountain regions at this time of year to fully appreciate what that means in Ephraim. No place on God's earth, has a clearer atmosphere, a bluer sky, or a more beautiful combination of color effects in trees and mountains, to gladden the artistic mind.

Betty stood on the broad piazza of her home, and took in a deep breath of the keen and refreshing air.

She was rather tired after a long siege of nursing her mother, Mrs. Emmit was at last out of danger, and convalescing. Betty was now going to leave her for the

first time—to go to the Manti Temple and fulfil her promise to be baptized for Edith.

She was very pale, but a calm joy was reflected on her countenance as she contemplated this act for her departed friend.

“Dear Edith,” she thought, “I feel you very near to me today.” With a thrill of happiness she went down the steps and entered her car. She was entirely alone, and drove her car slowly, while thinking of her past, wonderful experiences.

“How calm and serene Ephraim is after all the excitement of my last three years!” she thought. “I wonder if I’ll ever see Alma again—and George.”

A shade of sadness passed over her face. The very thought of him was painful yet. But time would doubtless make her love a thing of the past. She must have patience. But, try as she would, George occupied her thoughts until she reached the temple. Every scene with him was quickly rehearsed, and with each, came a sharp pang of regret for the inevitable.

But on entering the holy temple, peace came to her, and as she came out of the waters of baptism, that great happiness that comes to all who do vicarious work, lifted her far beyond her troubled thoughts, and her ride home was a quiet restful one.

All Nature seemed to sing of God’s coming peace on earth, and Betty’s heart was attuned to the harmony of the Invisible.

When she arrived home, she sought her room for a little rest. When she lay down, she found herself unable to sleep, but she closed her eyes to relax.

Hardly had she done this, when she felt a presence in her room. She opened her eyes—was she dreaming? No,—by her mantle, stood Edith,—Edith, more gloriously beautiful than ever before,—with the same fond expression in her violet eyes, as she looked upon Betty.

“Edith!” exclaimed Betty, sitting up in trembling delight.

Edith raised her hand as if for silence—then she smiled with gratitude for Betty’s promise kept.

Betty stretched out her arms, but Edith slowly shook her head,—still smiling, she pointed to her own picture on the mantle, and then to George’s.

“You will?” she whispered softly.

“I don’t understand,” answered Betty gently.

“You will, dear,” came the reply, and before Betty could again speak, Edith vanished from her sight.

It was the first vision Betty had ever had, and for awhile she lay trembling and weak. Finally she grew calm, but knowing it was impossible to rest, she arose and went downstairs to her mother.

“Betty, dear,” Mrs. Emmet said, brightly, “Your father just brought you a letter from Chicago.”

With a sudden, almost painful joy, she recognized Dr. Cadman’s handwriting. Opening the letter, she read aloud.

“Dear Betty: I am wondering if your folks could take in a tired Easterner for a month? I’m just longing for the hills of Ephraim and the wonderful rest that only your peaceful home could give me in my present state of mind.



"Perfect love knows no jealousy, Walter," she said gravely.

"Will tell you all when I see you. If I would inconvenience any of you, don't hesitate to say so.

"Kindest regards to all, your old friend,

"GEORGE CADMAN."

Betty's heart beat with such wild delight, she could scarcely finish reading the letter.

"Of course he shall come!" declared Mrs. Emmet, happily. "And we'll show him how we appreciate his kindness to you on your mission. Answer him right now, child—don't lose any time to tell him he is more than welcome."

* * * * *

"And so, Betty, now I have told you my life's story," concluded George seriously, looking out upon the glorious view of the mountains from the little knoll where he and Betty sat. This was their favorite resting place, a few miles from town, to which they were accustomed to walk every evening at sun down.

Betty did not answer. She was trying to adjust herself to the revelations. So it was Edith he had loved after all—not Alma!

"And," continued George, breaking the silence, "I'll surprise you when I tell you—I want to be baptized."

Betty turned to him in delight. "You mean it? O! I am so thankful!"

He looked at her tenderly. "Yes, I mean it. I had to suffer to really appreciate religion. And when it comes to choosing one, I don't have to compare long, what you offer me and what the world has to offer. And Betty,—

I've awakened to another truth that I have been blind to before."

"What truth?" asked Betty.

"The fact that I love you, little woman, and want you to be my wife."

Betty looked at him first, with unfeigned joy,—then drew away and regarded him with speechless wonder.

"Couldn't you love me, little one?" he asked, taking her hands tenderly, and trying to draw her to him.

She held him off.

"But—Edith—you just told me—you love her as always!"

"I do," returned George smiling. "But I love you none the less. I can't quite understand it, myself."

"But I do," returned Betty suddenly. "Now, I understand why dear Edith came to me,—the vision I told you of—she wishes to be sealed to you, George, for all eternity!"

"And you?" asked George, incredulously.

"Will do the temple work," returned Betty, smiling happily.

For a moment, George regarded her glowing countenance with reverence. Then he said earnestly,

"Is it possible you could do this without jealousy?"

"Perfect love knows no jealousy, George," she said gravely. "I want my love for you to be perfect."

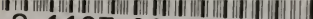
Tenderly, George took her in his arms.

"And may I be worthy of such Perfection!" he replied, his whole being suffused with the happiness of Unalloyed Love!

To
Leon G. Bond
from

Grandia and Grandina

Dec 25th 1930



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